

# THE WESTERN WAY

The Official Publication of the  
International Western Music Association

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CROSSHAIRS:

# Susie Knight

MULTI-TALENTED  
ENTERTAINER

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## From The President...



Robert Lorbeer  
*IWMA President*

## ROBERT'S RAMBLINGS

WOW! Our worlds have been turned upside down. But we have a lot to be thankful for. Despite the hardships, or should I say because of the hardships, we have “Cowboyed Up!”, and made do as best as we can.

A great big shout out to all of our members who created ways to keep performing. There will be a time, soon I hope, that our membership will be performing on stage again. But in the meantime, I encourage you to keep finding ways to perform. And don't forget that soon small venues will be opening up, so dust off your resume and keep the instruments tuned up and be ready to get out there and put on your “A” game. And do not forget, another opportunity for you might be in Churches; they are or will be opening soon. (And by the way, did you know that the fastest growing churches in the US now, are Cowboy Churches?)

Now for some really, really good news! I was pleased to open the August issue of “Cowboys and Indians” magazine and see pictures of five of our members: Doug Figg, Mariam Funke, Kristyn Harris, Jim Jones, and LeeLee Robert. They topped off an article in the “Open Range” section about the International Western Music Association 2019 Awards show. Beautiful pictures and an excellent article, great job Mark Bedor! There was no attribution as to the person who took the pictures, but I am sure the pictures were taken by Jack Hummel. Other people mentioned in the article are: Gary Allegretto and Red Steagall. Thanks Mark and thanks Jack!

**NOW FOR THE OVER THE TOP, REALLY, REALLY GOOD NEWS!** Two of our IWMA board directors experienced the Coronavirus and they both survived! And, we have also heard of some others in our IWMA ranks who have contracted the virus and are now back in the saddle again!

And finally, I want to give a big shout out to our Board of Directors. We have had to make very tough decisions, probably tougher decisions than what any other IWMA Board of Directors have ever had to make. Our open discussions of these issues have been very professional and in the best interests of IWMA. And I also want to thank Marsha Short for her steadfast loyalty to our membership.

And as Roy Rogers used to say, “Happy Trails, and may the good Lord take a likin’ to you”.

Robert Lorbeer  
*President, IWMA*



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### ON THE COVER...

Multifaceted talent, Susie Knight, is an awarded western singer/songwriter, cowgirl poet, professional clown, and auctioneer (just to name a few accomplishments). You can wrap-up Susie in one package and label it, "Entertainer," because when Susie performs, Susie entertains!

Photo courtesy Leading Lady Photography

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Theresa O'Dell  
Editor

# Making the Tough Call *It is Personal*

I was recently privileged to sit in on a ZOOM® call with 10-12 western event organizers. What an interesting discussion and each one shared the common thread – canceling their scheduled event. The conversation included why the decision was made and how to manage the process. There were some disheartening looks on faces as I watched the computer screen.

About 20 minutes into the call, the tenor seemed to change as these dedicated folks began to share and exchange ideas. These ideas first ranged from what factors mitigated making the tough call to cancel; to how to organize the whole process and details of canceling; to contacting performers and sponsors and vendors, and more. And then in what seemed like just a few minutes, the participants turned the call into a brainstorming think-tank, building on shared ideas such as using tents in the open-air, drive-in theaters or other uncharted venues to keep alive these gatherings. Each state and community will have its own restrictions, but I could see from these determined event organizers that they intend to cowboy-up!

It was refreshing to witness the enthusiasm at that ZOOM® meeting. I also noted that the primary goal was to ensure safety for the many volunteers, performers, and the community of fans they reach. This is as it should be. We may all view the pandemic in different ways, but we should do so with respect for the well-being of those around us. The virus is serious, and I hope you agree that you do not want to be the one to spread it, maybe to someone with already compromised health. I could stop here but let me go on.

In late June, both Marvin and I tested positive and experienced COVID-19. Without all the boring details, I will say we had nearly all of the symptoms short of severe

breathing issues. Like many of you, we did not know what to expect and so we moved through each day, caring for each other, monitoring fevers, etc. As you can tell, we survived. And we did so without hospitalization or medication other than over-the-counter drugs for fever, cough and muscle pain. We slept a lot. Our illness was milder than some and more intense than some others who have walked that path.

We chose not to make public our experience while going through it, except immediate family and a few friends who grocery shopped and even dropped off some meals. We faced it one day at a time. We didn't know how long it would last. It differs for each individual. We also knew there was uncertainty in outcomes, but we weren't fearful. Maybe we were naïve; maybe it was our faith. We quarantined ourselves for 23 days, about 10 days or so longer than necessary. Some have asked why quarantine longer than professionals say is required? It was personal for us; we knew we didn't want to infect others, some who might not be as fortunate as we had been.

I share the experience here because I saw the genuine concern coming from the event organizers as I sat in on that call. Before that, I had heard the concern from the IWMA Board of Directors as they united to cancel the November convention this year. In both of these instances, it was "personal" for those having to make the call. They were making decisions that affect people they really care about – Performers, Volunteers, Vendors and Fans. It is difficult and costly to cancel a major event. From where I sat in recuperation through most of July, I knew it was the right thing to do. Agree or disagree, but we need to respect others who view things differently, whether it be COVID-19 or life.

Stay well, stay active, and I look forward to seeing you, hearing the songs and poetry, and laughing with old and new friends again soon. 🐾

## From The Executive Director...



Marsha Short  
Executive Director

What a difference a few months can make. We were planning IWMA2020 and having a great time...then suddenly the rug was swept from under our feet. So now what? We've talked with other gatherings and venues, all of whom have had to cancel functions and they're asking the same thing: now what?

And no one really has an answer except to stay positive and keep moving forward.

There've been a lot of unintended consequences of being at home for so long. I'm sure I'm not the only one to have gained the "COVID 19." Please tell me you all are stress eating, too. I've finished up a half dozen sewing projects including a Christmas stocking kit I bought 10 years ago. We watched everything Netflix had to offer and subscribed to Disney+ and immediately binge watched Fess Parker in Davy Crockett. And I'm a Bronze Level 5 in solitaire!

Without a convention to plan, a huge hole has been left in my days. I've tried to stay busy minding everyone else's business, but that still leaves the nights when I used to lie awake worrying about getting performer bios, selling enough tickets for the lunches and dinners, finding volunteers...the list was endless.

Then I discovered Internet radio, streaming 24/7. I know, everyone else discovered it a long time ago. I've listened to our members on radio shows around the world. Then someone sent me a YouTube link and it was all over. Have you seen how many great performances are on YouTube? And Facebook live! It's like mini-conventions everywhere, and you get to pick and choose who you watch and when. Go to the IWMA website ([iwesternmusic.org](http://iwesternmusic.org)), look for your favorite performers, click on their websites and see what they're up to. We're not likely to be back to "normal" anytime soon, so this is a great way to support them and stay in touch.

Our wish is that you all are safe, healthy and taking all the precautions necessary to stay that way. We'll miss seeing you in November! 🐾

*Marsha*



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# In the CROSSHAIRS



Susie Knight

It might not seem as though the fields of singer, songwriter, cowboy poet, auction ringman, clown, dancer, wrangler, barrel racer, store clerk, trail ride guide and actress have much in common. Yet, they are all occupations and pursuits of one diversely talented Susie Knight.

## The Common Thread

What ties the different fields together is a common thread: Susie Knight's driving impulse to be an entertainer, especially in all things western. It seems she was destined from an early age to pursue a life as a "showman." Susie was raised in the Chicago suburbs in a show-business home. Both her parents were classically trained vocalists and made part of their living singing in nightclubs, concerts, and weddings. Susie says, "I'm an entertainer. It's in my DNA. My parents were always rehearsing and doing concerts and two pianos were going all the time at home. I didn't know any differently." By three years old, Susie was already taking piano lessons and dancing ballet on stage. In eighth grade, she took a guitar class at her school and, after only two weeks, wrote her first song and sang it to the class. "It was terrible, but that was the beginning for me of writing music."

Susie's love of being an entertainer found its match in her love of horses and the western lifestyle. Her two

## SUSIE KNIGHT

BY NANCY FLAGG

distinct interests merged and became the foundation for her life and career. Just how did a girl from Chicago become a fan of "all things western"? Her father grew up on an Indiana farm and was an exceptional horseman and he wanted to give Susie a taste of that experience. Susie's father and mother took their toddler to a dude ranch at Woodside Ranch in Wisconsin. There, she fell in love with horses and everything related to them. She returned to the ranch most summers and hated leaving at the end of the week; "I would cry in the car all the way back to Chicago."

Susie's western passion expanded into her everyday life. She rode horses near home, went trail riding, competed in Western pleasure horse shows, and did barrel racing. Western music was added to her catalog of interests after she heard Chris LeDoux sing on a record. She was hooked on the music and started writing cowboy songs. "I couldn't get away from it. The songs were bad, but if I didn't write, I would have simply exploded."

In her 20's she began writing cowboy poetry, but not intentionally. She was composing lyrics for "Croppie," about her favorite horse from the Circle M Ranch in South Dakota. The problem was that the melody just did not come together. She kept honing the lyrics until she suddenly realized that it was a poem, "Just as the good Lord intended it to be."

When she was 21 and working on a ranch in Pine Ridge, South Dakota, she entered one of her songs in a local radio contest. She won the grand prize (an ashtray) and her song was played on air but because the station did not notify her in time, she missed hearing it the one time it was broadcast.

Susie's insatiable need to write has diminished over the years but sometimes the impulse returns. "The divine inspiration comes when it does and it's amazing how quickly the song falls out on paper but then I need to rewrite and rewrite again until it's as perfect as it can be." At age 16, she wrote "Hoedown Tonight", but continued to rewrite the syllables and words for 43 more years until she recorded it on her 2019 album "Turn 'Em Loose."

## Show Biz 101

Although Susie was immersed from childhood in showbiz and had many performances under her belt, she still had a steep learning curve before becoming a polished stage act. Her guitar playing debut came when she and her friend Raquel Martinez were asked to play guitar on Sundays at the 10:45 weekly contemporary church service. Next, one of her teachers, Joyce Lang, asked her to be in a teen dance group that would perform at local nursing homes, Veteran's homes, and the Naval base. Susie agreed and found herself on stage dancing in the group numbers, then quickly changing into her western clothes to perform a solo song, and then changing her outfit again for the next dance.

Susie found other opportunities to perform and entered a lot of talent shows. She says that she had to work hard and rarely won contests but kept at it. Over four or five years of doing shows, she made many mistakes. "That's where I broke guitar strings and had to keep singing, forgot the words and had to keep singing, had an out-of-tune guitar and had to keep strumming and dropped the pick into the guitar hole and had to keep playing. "This was good stuff - I was making these terrible mistakes, but it was how I learned."

Her time on stage came to a halt when she married at age 21. Her husband was not particularly supportive of her writing and performing so she put away her guitar, settled down and had two sons. However, the need to connect with people through performance re-surfaced strongly after the kids were grown and she returned to the "stage", though in a fresh way. In 1999, she took a continuing education course on how to be a clown and then landed her first professional, paying gig.

Susie loved her new line of work. She says that a lot of what she had learned about performing over her life all coalesced in her clown role. She sang, danced, and entertained. "I felt guilty having so much fun and being paid to do it." The first character she developed was "Watoosie", named after a dance style she enjoyed. When her agent offered her a gig working at an event for a young boy who was afraid of clowns, Susie created her "Lasso the Cowgirl" character. Rather than clown makeup and garb, Susie dressed in cowboy hat, boots, spurs, buckle, and jeans. She later added to her repertoire "Yee-Ha, the Cowpoke Clown," a clown with cowgirl charm.

Susie became a successful birthday and festival clown in the Chicago suburbs. She began to expand her portfolio to include a wider variety of shows, such as a Broadway revue and a cowboy-themed program that she performed at assisted living homes. The work was going well until 2005 when she and her husband divorced. Susie moved to Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

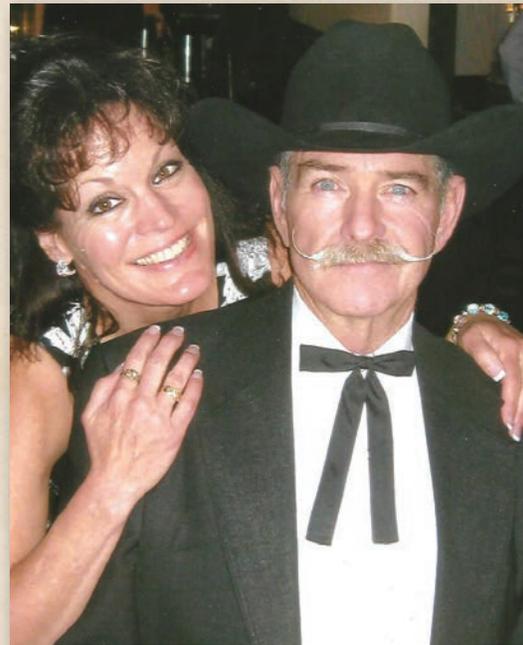
In Colorado, she planned on doing seasonal work at guest ranches, western stores, and cowboy restaurants. She also hoped to play gigs at cowboy gatherings, surrounded by people who loved cowboy music and poems. After a few years in Steamboat Springs, Susie moved to the tiny town of Florissant, Colorado to live with her cousins.

It was a life-altering move. One day, while in the grocery store, Susie met blue-eyed, handlebar mustachioed David Knight. They were married a year later.

## Going for Her Dream

The story of how Susie and Dave met in aisle four of the grocery store is described in Susie's poem, "My Western Man." She calls Dave a divine gift. He loves and supports her and wants her to live her dream of being a western entertainer. "If it were not David Knight, I would not be able to pursue this profession. He pushed me out the door and said, 'Go!'" He meant what he said because one week after the wedding, Susie was performing at the Lewiston, Idaho cowboy gathering. Disc Jockey Tommy Tucker spotted Susie at the event and asked, "Hey, aren't you supposed to be on your honeymoon?"

Since then, Susie has performed at many cowboy gatherings. Of all her performances, her most memorable one was the Cowboy Idol contest in Kennewick, Washington. There were several days of competition rounds and she made it to the finals. In the final round, she recited her poem "Darby's Stampede String." When she finished,



Susie with husband Dave Knight, the ever-supportive, love of her life.

*Continued on page 8*

## IN THE CROSSHAIRS

*Continued from page 7*



Reciting poetry; or, could be said, "poetry in motion."

the crowd of 900 were stomping their feet, clapping, and cheering for her. She won the contest and still cherishes the memory of the huge crowd screaming for her.

Dave continues to inspire Susie to write and perform. One day as he headed off to his work as a water well specialist, he casually remarked that she had not written any songs in a while. His comment triggered a spark and Susie's songwriting wheels began spinning. She spotted a print on the wall of horses charging out of a gate. It was a print by Dyrk Godby that reminded her of her life on the Circle M Ranch in Pine Ridge, South Dakota and she took out her guitar and began to write. When Dave arrived home from work, she sat him down and said, "listen..." and played for him her new song "Turn 'Em Loose."

Susie has recorded four albums to date: "Western Wordsmith" (2010), "Leather Wings" (2012), "Fillin' Tanks" (2015) and "Turn 'Em Loose" (2019). Her goal in making records is to take the listener on a journey where they can feel the energy they would feel if they were at a live show.

Susie's years of entertaining, writing and recording have been recognized through many awards. Susie was, "shocked when no-name Susie who?" won the 2010 Cowboy Poetry CD of the year for "Western Wordsmith." She received Female Poet of the year in 2014 and 2016 from the Western Music Association (WMA) and the Cowgirl Poet award in 2013 from the Academy of Western Artists." She was also nominated for the 2019 IWMA (International Western Music Association) Entertainer of the Year award. "Fillin' Tanks" won 2016 WMA Cowboy Poetry CD of the Year.

## Goals and New Skills

A creative goal that Susie has in mind is writing a book. She has always been a storyteller regaling folks with entertaining tales about her life on the Circle M Ranch. She says that folks have urged her to write down her stories because they are entertaining and real.

In addition to her other pursuits, Susie started a new line of work as an auctioneer and ringman. Throughout her years working on ranches and horse riding, she attended her share of auctions and always admired the work of auctioneers. She wrote the poem "Cookie Lockhart: Queen of Auctioneers" about the first female auctioneer inducted into the National Auctioneering Hall of Fame. Susie met Cookie a few times and described her as, "a big personality and a real cowgirl." Cookie is still leading auctions at 83 years old.

Susie's auction experiences eventually struck a chord because, at age 59, she decided to learn the trade. She enrolled in a course at the Worldwide College of Auctioneering in Iowa, followed closely by a World Champion Ringman course. A ringman is the person who generates excitement and takes the bids at an auction. It turns out that the ringman role is a great fit for Susie's outgoing, engaging style and she loves the work. She says she is still slow at bid calling, "Three-dollar bid, now four, who will give me four? ..." but people like her style. Her first gig was a mini auction in Colorado (a fundraiser for the International Western Music Association – Colorado chapter) and she thrived in the role. Susie was quickly hired for three more jobs. Unfortunately, the pandemic stopped all in-person auctions and her ringman work for the near future.



Susie the Colorado trail-guide wrangler rode her first pony as a toddler and her first horse at age 5.

While learning the ringman trade, Susie also had a solid concert career, though sticking close to home. She decided that a touring artist life was not for her. "That's not an easy life. I like my husband and my comfy bed." Instead, she was making a living playing at cowboy gatherings, house concerts and local spots, such as, senior assisted living facilities in Denver. At least, that was the case until the Corona-19 pandemic shut down everything. Now, there are no concerts. She has a few small gigs booked for the future but has had to return to other types of work.

Currently, Susie is working as a trail guide at Bear Creek Stables in Morrison, Colorado. She says she loves being a wrangler and teaching people to ride. The hay lofts, the smell of the animals, the cowboys and the herds all take her back to her childhood summers at the dude ranch. "It's all there, still alive in me. I'm still that little girl who wants to live that life and share it with others."

### Fervor for the Future

Eventually, live shows will return, and Susie will be ready. She has a fervor for sharing western culture with the world. "With my whole being, I want everybody to know about western music and cowboy poetry;" When she strides on stage with her guitar and wearing a fringed buckskin dress and tall cowboy boots, people assume that she will be singing country music. She clarifies for them, "No, folks. I'm gonna sing western music. She explains the difference and talks about how country and western used to be paired, but country went off on a tangent, while western music stayed true to its roots. "It's about the roots of ranching life and cowboys and wholesome story-telling and you're gonna love it!" She plays "Tumblin' Tumbleweeds" and "Don't Fence Me In" and recites one of her poems. By the time she sings her "yodel-ay-ee-hoo", the crowd is singing along with her and she knows they are "in her pocket" and are soaking it all in.

Susie brings her western zeal wherever she goes. On trail rides, she leads songs but has found that kids do not know the classics, such as, "Home on the Range." Not deterred, Susie starts the song and the parents and grandma join in. Before long, the kids pick it up and the entire group belts out the refrain as they amble down the trail.

Susie has been the President of the Colorado chapter of the International Western Music Association (IWMA)

for four years. She feels "in her soul" that the IWMA is the vital focal point for western music and poetry. If she could have one dream for western music, it is that the Grammys would have an award category for the genre. "We're not small potatoes, the talent we have in western music is high-end."

When Susie goes on stage, she promises the audience that they will become fans of western music and poetry. She takes them through a range of emotions and often finishes with a powerful and poignant R.J. Vandygriff piece. "They love it so much, they cry." It is that response and their awakening to the genre that motivate Susie to



The image of the West can be seen through her eyes as Susie performs for the audience.

continue her work. "That's why I'm an entertainer. I'm not a great singer or guitarist but I'm a showman and when I'm done, you're gonna love western music and cowboy poetry."

Thinking back to when she was growing up, Susie despaired of ever measuring up to her parent's talent. "I knew I would never be able to sing as well as them. I did not have their voices; their gift." When she disclosed this thought to her father a few years before he passed away in 2006, he gave her what she calls the biggest compliment of her life. He said with certainty, "My dear, you're much better than your mom and I ever were because...we never wrote a song." 🐾



Nancy is the producer and host of the "Cowboy Tracks" radio program at KDRT in Davis California. The show features western music, cowboy poetry, western swing, interviews, and western history and can be heard on KDRT.org, Facebook or iTunes podcasts. Nancy is a member of the IWMA California chapter and regular contributor to *The Western Way*.



# *Penned by Lantern Light*

This column will spotlight members of the Western Wordsmiths Chapter of the International Western Music Association. It will highlight an invited poet guest with possible short biographical information of his/her works. If a member of the Western Wordsmiths Chapter and if interested in submitting one piece of original work for publication, please contact the Western Wordsmiths chapter president.

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## Puttin' Up The Hay

*by Scott L. Wiswell*

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*It's funny the little things that spurs your mind to wander  
A time machine within you head of memories to ponder  
On one hand a cursed recap of a life that's winding down  
But on the other precious jewels that adorn a royal crown*

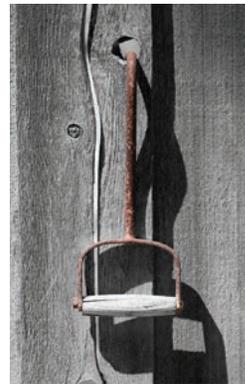
*It caught my eye hanging silent inside the old hay barn  
Like a medieval deadly weapon from an ol' King Arthur yarn  
The tip still shined like silver though its maker's name was faint  
A wooden handle, dried and cracked, underscored by faded paint*

*Just an old steel hay-hook which I used when I was young  
A remembrance of buckin' bales in the blazin' Kansas sun  
An implement of practicality that served me in my youth  
But now a painful reminder of nature's cruelty and truth*

*As I picked up that ol' hay-hook, the memories came flooding back  
The smell of dry alfalfa, the bailer, ol' leather hay'n chaps  
The soreness and the sweat are faded memories now today  
How I long for those days of summer just a puttin' up the hay*

*I looked out from the barn door with the hay-hook in my hand  
At round bales standing resolute scattered out across the land  
A sadness overtook me knowin' our time had come and gone  
Our useful days had passed us by like the birthing of the dawn*

*As times have changed, that old hook no longer has much worth  
Its usefulness came from bygone days to be buried in the earth  
But moving forward is preordained, it's just a part of life  
It can be met with kind acceptance or with bitterness and strife*



*As I pondered all the memories, in my  
hand was my ol' friend  
I swung it like a little boy, in my mind  
playin' pretend  
My depression turned to joy as I  
recalled those summer days  
And the happy memories out in sun  
just a puttin' up the hay*



**Scott Wiswell** is a Cowboy Poet from 'out Valley Center Kansas way'. Writing cowboy poetry for just over three years, though as a writing 'hobbyist' he self-published two books, along the way he found poetic knack in reverent works. "That (those) transcended to the cowboy way, the way I live, always enjoyed the country, horses, cattle, the way of life." By means of his way of life, Scott's writings found way to paper and performance. Scott is the 2019 Kansas Cowboy Poetry Contest - Serious Poetry winner and a recent third place finisher in the humorous division in the 2020 Kansas contest. The retired Wichita Police Department Detective now works as an Investigator at the District Attorney's office, and is aiming to attend more cowboy poetry events.

# TALES OF THE WEST

by Jim Wilson



One of the things that I enjoyed doing with my dad was watching western movies, although it drove my mother nuts. You see, while enjoying the film, we kept up a running commentary about the stuff that wasn't real, or the stuff a real cowboy wouldn't do. One of our favorites, common in the B-grade westerns, was the number of times they would shoot their guns without reloading. In fact, I'm not sure I ever saw one of the B-grade cowboys reload his gun.

Another thing that always tickled us was when you'd see Roy and the Sons of the Pioneers riding down the trail singing one of those good western songs. When you looked closely, the only set of saddlebags in the whole group were on Trigger. Yet, that night in camp they would all have different outfits on, especially Roy. And they'd have a guitar, fiddle, and Pat Brady would be playing his upright bass. But, as long as the music was good and Roy whooped all the bad guys, I don't guess it really mattered how they managed to carry all that stuff.

Speaking of B-grade cowboy stars, my favorite among the non-singing variety was Wild Bill Elliott. I liked him because he dressed more like the real cowboys that I knew and he always rode good quarter horses. The thing that got me, though, was the fact that he wore his guns backwards, butts forward. Many's the afternoon, after spending Saturday morning at the Paramount Theater in Austin, that I'd strap on my cap gun, turn it around in the holster, and try to get as fast as Wild Bill Elliott. That never happened, but it didn't stop me from trying.

A real-life heroine was Nan Aspinwall (1880-1964). Miss Aspinwall was the first woman to ride a horse completely across the United States. In 1910, she set out from San Francisco Bay and rode some 4,496 miles to New York, making the trip in 180 days. For the trip, she was mounted on a good-looking Thoroughbred mare, Lady Ellen.

Miss Aspinwall made the ride on a bet with Buffalo Bill Cody. And I just wonder what old Bill had to pay up when she swung down out of the saddle in New York. By the way, there's a good book about this fearless woman, "In Genuine Cowgirl Fashion", by Mary C. Higgenbotham (2007, The Long Rider Guild Press), that you may want to check out.

One of the lesser known gunfighters of the Old West was Robert Clay Allison (1841-1887). Raised in Texas, Allison moved to Colfax County, New Mexico, after the Civil War. He was involved in the various land disputes of that area and

*Continued on page 14*

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

It pains me to report that, to this day, a controversy exists between Prescott, Arizona, and Pecos, Texas. The issue regards who gets the credit for the first rodeo. Pecos held theirs in 1883 and Prescott's came along in 1888. So, at first glance, the credit would seem to go to Pecos, Texas.

However, the Pecos rodeo was a hit-and-miss proposition during those early days and might have missed a few years in holding the event. And Prescott claims credit for the first continual rodeo. Being a native Texan, you can imagine who I am going with, but don't let that stop you from jumping in and taking sides in one of the most serious disagreements of our times.

Jim Wilson is a retired peace officer, former Texas Sheriff and lifelong student of western history who lives in Alpine, Texas. He has been a member of the IWMA since the mid-90's and served on the board of directors for a number of years. He has been playing music, mostly western music, since his college days...and "it is absolutely none of your business how long ago that was."



# GUITARS

## THE HEALING POWER OF MUSIC

BY SYD MASTERS

**G**uitars for Vets is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that connects United States military warriors suffering from post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD) with the healing powers of music. Through sponsors and donations they are able to provide quality instruments to these heroes along with a minimum of ten lessons.

It all started in 2007 when Milwaukee area guitar instructor Patrick Netteshiem was introduced to Dan Van Buskirk. Dan is a Marine veteran having served in Vietnam. He wanted to play guitar but felt his struggles with PTSD would prevent him from being able to properly focus. After spending some time together, both men discovered that just the opposite was true. The strong heart and spirit that gave Dan the ability to get through Vietnam was all he needed to make music and conquer the instrument. After a few months of lessons the two of them brought this modality to other veterans and were inspired by the possibilities. It was then that Patrick coined the phrase and slogan: "GUITARS FOR VETS – The healing power of music in the hands of heroes."

To date the group has provided over 4,000 brand new guitars and more than 40,000 lessons to our nation's veterans. Over 500 volunteers work at 120 chapters in 40 states. Among these volunteers are the Ambassadors – an elite group of professional touring guitarists whose recognizable names and faces help raise awareness about PTSD and Guitars for Vets. G4V Ambassadors represent an eclectic array of guitar styles and music genres in an effort to reach out to diverse audiences from coast to coast.



# FOR VETS

## IN THE HANDS OF HEROES.

For a very reasonable donation of only \$200, students receive either Gibson or Yamaha guitars. Both companies are important sponsors and work directly with the organization to ensure that quality instruments are placed in the hands of veterans. Guitars for Vets also receives donated guitars. These are inspected, cleaned and repaired before they are given to a student. If a donated guitar is beyond fixing, it doesn't go to waste. The six string is presented to a vet with artistic ability and they get to paint it any way they want. These are referred to as the "Art Guitars" and can be very popular auction items.

Studies have shown this program to decrease anxiety, increase self-esteem, and reduce episodes of nightmares and flashbacks among the participants. Students showed a 21% improvement in PTSD symptoms and a 27% decrease in related depression symptoms. The research study attributed learning and playing the guitar to be the primary catalyst for these improvements. Making music can help veterans safely connect with their surroundings and with other people. Guitars 4 Vets wants to ensure that as many veterans as possible have this opportunity.

As every picker knows, when you learn to play the guitar it soon becomes your very good friend. When holding it in your hands you are never alone, or lonely, ever again. Guitars for Vets is an admirable organization doing their part to put music therapy within the reach of those who need it most. Learn more or Donate at [guitars4vets.org](http://guitars4vets.org). 🐾

**A Word from Syd:** Guitars for Vets had seen some of my Facebook Live concerts and YouTube videos. I was contacted by founder Patrick Netteshiem and asked if I would be part of an event they call "21 Guitar Salute." This is an annual fundraiser in which 21 different entertainers contribute their talent and reach out to the listeners on behalf of the veterans and the G4V organization. I was excited to partake and sent them a video they could use as this year's event was online due to Covid-19. They have over 51,000 followers and a lot of folks were tuning in. After it aired, Patrick got back to me and said there was an overwhelming audience response to the "cowboy guy" that sang and played the acoustic guitar. He then asked me to become an official ambassador for Guitars 4 Vets and I immediately accepted.



An Ambassador

Here are some of the things I will be doing as a G4V Ambassador!

- I will be honoring veterans at all of my concerts with a special segment in each show just for them.
- We will be reaching out to veteran groups in all the cities where I will be performing and offering a selection of free tickets to any Vets who wish to attend. Especially those who may benefit from the great work provided by G4V.
- I have already started organizing a live, one-day, multi-band festival with G4V as the sole beneficiary of the proceeds. Hopefully one day, in a galaxy far, far away, we will get to play live music again!
- We are creating a page on my website that will inform folks about the magic that takes place with guitar therapy, and also provide updates regarding G4V events and members accomplishments.

Often, I sit in my music room and look at all the items hanging on the walls and sitting on shelves. Plenty of pictures, awards and mementos to remind me of all the three decades I have been a western music recording artist, songwriter and entertainer. And then I wonder, what am I really accomplishing? Sharing my music with people and making their day a little brighter because it is a great way to navigate through life. But is that really enough? I have now been blessed with the opportunity to give something to the people who give me my freedom. I will not let them down.

## TALES OF THE WEST

*Continued from page 11*

is known to have killed several men. In fact, he killed one fellow in the St. James Hotel, in Cimarron, where many of us have stayed during the good cowboy gathering that is held there.

Clay Allison is also alleged to have tangled with Wyatt Earp in Dodge City, Kansas. He met Earp on the street and hot words were exchanged. The confrontation might have led to a gunfight, but Allison happened to turn around and see Bat Masterson behind him, holding a sawed-off shotgun. Allison might have been a little hot headed, but he was no fool, so he suddenly remembered some important unfinished business back in New Mexico.

About 1883, Allison sold his ranch in northern New Mexico and bought a new one on the Pecos River near the Texas/New Mexico line. Legend has it that he kind of cleaned up his ornery ways and spent more time tending to his ranch and family. However, in 1887, he backslid just a little and started celebrating our nation's birthday one day too soon. On July 3, 1887, with drink taken, as the Irish say, he fell out of his supply wagon and it ran over him. In the end, a team of mules did to him what a bunch of Southwest gunmen couldn't. 🐾

## INSTRUMENTS

### AVAILABLE FOR BEGINNING MUSICIANS

- Yamaha F310 Dreadnaught /cardboard case
- Harmony Sovereign Dreadnaught (Hog/Spruce) Hard case
- Yamaha Classical CG-201S nice case
- Washburn Millenium Dreadnaught nice case
- Ovation Acoustic/Ovation case
- Alvarez Acoustic 12 String MD80/12 (Hog/Sitka Spruce) Foam reinforced case w/humidity meter
- Yamaha Classical G-150 black label, Cedar top
- Sovereign Banjo (Harmony knockoff)
- Anterez A Mandolin AMD29A
- Student Model Lewis Violin w/student bow
- Fender Elec Mandolin FM52E SB (did not check electronics)
- Dixon Baritone Ukulele (needs bridge re-glue, and has heel separation) poor condition
- Buescher Aristocrat Saxophone Good Condition
- Music books
- Misc strings, guitar stands, tuners

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS HAVE BEEN DONATED FOR LOAN TO IWMA BEGINNING MUSICIANS

Contact Marsha Short for terms and availability,  
or if you have an instrument you would like to donate.

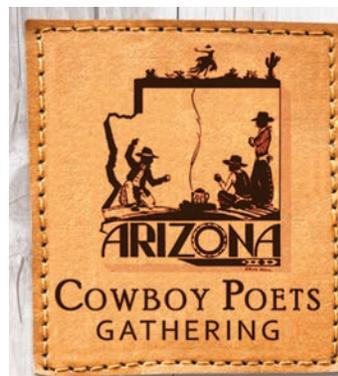
[marsha@westernmusic.org](mailto:marsha@westernmusic.org)  
or 505-563-0673

### Consider a *Legacy Gift*

The International  
Western Music Association  
*a 501(c)3 nonprofit*

An end of life donation to the International Western Music Association will live into perpetuity. Please consider a donation to the IWMA Endowment Fund. Consult with your financial planner. Contact Marsha Short for more information on the Endowment Fund.

[marsha@westernmusic.org](mailto:marsha@westernmusic.org)  
505.563.0673  
[iwesternmusic.org](http://iwesternmusic.org)



AUGUST  
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Yavapai College Performing Arts Center  
PRESCOTT, ARIZONA

For more information, visit  
[AZCowboyPoets.org](http://AZCowboyPoets.org)

# The Western World Tour



by Rick Huff

**Western Music** is most often acoustic in its core instrumentation. Its lyrics are typically about the lives, loves, lore, locales, legends and legacy of the old and new West, its peoples or Cowboying worldwide.

Tips? Comments? Ideas for the column, send to:  
Rick Huff, P.O. Box 8442, Albuquerque, NM 87198-8442  
or [bestofthewest@swcp.com](mailto:bestofthewest@swcp.com)

Have you ever had news you've been dying to tell people, but you stay mum because you're sworn to secrecy? Well I've had just such a nugget tucked away for more than a year now, and I still can't reveal the specifics. But in this time of looking for hopeful signs I'm feeling a higher calling than just honoring confidences. I'll reveal this much. Because it involves Broadway, it may also provide an exquisite opportunity for us to put Western Music back into the national awareness...if the plan comes together...if we play it right...if the pandemic allows...if, if, if!!!

Since its earliest days The Great White Way, as New York's legendary theater district is known, has periodically played host to Western-themed entertainments. The Cowboy and the mythic West first captured Eastern imaginations through the fanciful reportage of Ned Buntline and the penny dreadfuls along with the popularity of live touring extravaganzas...notably Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and Pawnee Bill's Far East Show. The latter two provided major background elements for the 1946 musical "Annie Get Your Gun," the Irving Berlin show that helped launch Ethel Merman in the rowdy role of sharpshooter Annie Oakley.

While perusing a Musical Theatre history book I hadn't had time to fully examine until now, I discovered a photo showing a pair of adjacent theaters from the early 1900s. Playing onstage at the Crystal Hall's One Cent Vaudeville we find the "Falsely Accused Cowboy's Race For A Wife." Next door at the Comedy Theatre "The Ranchman's Son" played a double bill with "The Cowboy Gambler!" Slightly later on, a headlining star of Florenz Zeigfeld's legendary productions would be none other than the rope spinning "cowboy" luminary Will Rogers, a fact that itself became subject fodder for a 1991 Broadway musical called "The Will Rogers Follies." That Peter Stone/Cy Coleman show with Keith Carradine as Rogers was following a well-traveled trail of successful Broadway shows riding Western themes.

It was a classic Max Brand story that brought "Destry Rides Again" to the silver screen three separate times (1932, 1939 and 1954). The benchmark film version was the middle one which featured Jimmy Stewart and Marlene Dietrich, but the story of a gunless lawman who tames a lawless wild west town appeared on Broadway as a musical by Leonard Gershe and Harold Rome in 1959. Andy

Griffith starred as Destry, inspiring a later role for him as the unarmed sheriff of a town called "Mayberry." 1951's Broadway season saw the premiere of a Western musical featuring a number of songs that would become standards in the popular repertoire. Lerner & Lowe's "Paint Your Wagon" was set in the gold rush era of California and told the story of ensuing romantic rivalries and complications when a grizzled prospector buys a wife at auction. The songs included "I Talk To The Trees" and "Wanderin' Star," which became an international hit when Lee Marvin (sort of) sang it in the 1969 film version. Marvin's co-star Jean Seberg described his singing voice as sounding "like rain gurgling down a rusty drain pipe." It should be mentioned her own singing performance was dubbed in by another lady. A third song from the show "They Call The Wind 'Mariah'" is frequently found on today's contemporary Western stages and albums. Last but not least by a long shot on our tour of Broadway's Western-themed musicals, the 1940s not only saw the arrival of the earlier-mentioned "Annie Get Your Gun," but also the premiere of one of the most often revived and performed musicals of all time! In 1943 Rogers & Hammerstein's monumental "Oklahoma" exploded onto the St. James Theatre stage to unanimous acclaim. It was based on Oklahoma playwright Lynn Riggs' play "Green Grow The Lilacs." Upon seeing the Riggs show, producer Theresa "Terry" Helburn thought it would make a good musical, a notion no doubt enhanced through seeing Tex Ritter onstage singing cowboy songs during the play's Pre-Show and Intermission. Helburn encouraged composer Richard Rogers to attend and the rest is Broadway history...including one more historical tidbit. In the "Oklahoma" audience one evening sat an inspired Herbert J. Yates, el jefe over at Republic Studios in Hollywood. Visions of singing cowboys danced in his head, motivating him to now include Broadway-style production numbers in his B-Westerns. And that, in more ways than you know, directly brings us back to our opening thoughts here.

Once we are liberated from our vow of silence on it, we will devote all kinds of space to our nugget of news! In the meantime, those who are aware will just have to hope that nugget is an indication of a rich vein to be mined, for the benefit of western music, for years to come. 🐾



# Chapter Update

## ARIZONA CHAPTER

**President: John Paulson**  
**Johnpaulson1945@gmail.com**

The Arizona chapter continues to await better and safer times to resume its chapter meetings and activities. Keep the music and poetry going; hopefully we can get together again soon to share it live!

## CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

**President: Bob Thomas**  
**bob@bobthomasmusic.com**

Like other regional chapters, CA performers have not had many opportunities to have showcases, house concerts, gatherings, or any gigs for several months. Not only has the pandemic affected our efforts here, but at this writing things are tough in CA. Most of the state is burning. There is no live music or poetry now in Los Angeles or throughout the state and probably will not be heard again until next year. At least, in person. Things are still happening virtually, thanks to technology. The good news is... CA music and poetry performers will be back!

## COLORADO CHAPTER

**President: Susie Knight**  
**lassothecowgirl@yahoo.com**

I had hoped this update would contain news and photos from the three Showcases that we'd planned for our Chapter in Colorado. They were to be in Florissant, Steamboat Springs and Pine in July, August and September. But, you guessed it... Covid-19 tied the hands of our venue-providers so the Showcases were unfortunately cancelled. Most of

the effort before a Showcase falls on me during the months prior to each, reaching out to the venues to secure our events, contacting Performing Members via email with a "Call for Performers," then communicating with all before creating the fliers for promotion. I enjoy the tasks, and as the Showcase dates approach, I feel the anticipation and excitement building. Then, POOF! Cancelled! Well, everything works out for the best (they say). So, we'll simply come back stronger NEXT YEAR when everything returns to normal. Thank you to all that signed up to perform this year: Steve Jones, A Cowboy's Legacy, Beverly Gray, Ramblin' Rangers, Vic Anderson, Ray Delgado, Sonja Oliver, Dennis Russell, Patricia Martin, Bruce Neumann, jj steele, Brian Warner, Sherl Cederburg, Terry Nash, George Ray Russell, Rex Rideout, Bruce Johnson, Lynne Belle Lewis, Randy Hoyt, and Peggy Malone.



*Golden, CO performers.  
Photos courtesy Bill Patterson*

Since there was only one Showcase this year in Golden, Colorado in January, we will not be giving out a Top Hand Award this year. The Top Hand Award was designed to go to the Chapter Member that went above and beyond to support the Showcases during the year. On a positive note, our member, George Ray Russell, (Boulder, CO) won 1<sup>st</sup> Place in the Humorous Category award for the Kansas Cowboy Poetry Gathering! CONGRATULATIONS, George! And, our member, KC LaCourse (Las Vegas, NV) is breaking through the standard of western entertainment's promotional creativity with her weekly online "Hearts of the West Showcase" which feature videos of cowboy poets and western music performers from all over the continent (so far). She also features a "Tip of the Hat" to western entertainment supporters, and our own member, Bill Patterson, was featured in August (thanks to his outstanding photography of performers and benevolence towards western entertainment). Talk about spreading the word – KC is getting 1000+ viewers each week! Now, those updates are something we can all applaud and give a big, "YEE-HAAAAW!"

## COLUMBIA CHAPTER

**President: Tom Swearingen**  
**tomswearingen@gmail.com**

By now I'm sure you're tired of hearing the terms "unprecedented" and "new normal." So I'll just say "these are some weird times and I don't like it much." But...there are positive things happening. I'm finding that there are bright and shining moments and opportunities if I look for them rather than let my thoughts dwell on the negative. I hope that's true for you. Here are a few highlights from Columbia

Chapter members in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, B.C., and further afield. Jim Crofts got to check off a bucket list item. Headed to a roundup in central Oregon's Great Basin, his route took him by the little high desert town of Fort Rock. Stopping in at the historical museum that features several old homestead-era buildings, he told the folks that he knew the country and where some of the buildings came from and recited his "Homestead" poem inspired by the history and heritage of the land. Another special and memorable experience was his "Parade of One" on the 4th of July. He and his horse walked an American flag that had been carried on a combat mission in Afghanistan by his niece's husband around his town and along the highway to honks, waves, and thumbs up from folks headed out to celebrate the day. Jim is looking forward to roping in the annual Whispering Meadows Fiesta Big-Loop Ranch Roping and Cowboy Gathering in Junction City, OR and MC'ing the poetry campfire with a special effort to add youth participation at the mic.



*The Panhandle Cowboys demonstrate social distance practice.*

At the time of this writing Dave Fulfs and J.B Barber's duo, The Panhandle Cowboys, and poet A.K. Moss are scheduled to perform at the Lost 'N Lava Cowboy Gathering in Shoshone, ID in September. A.K. also released a new CD, *They Come Prancin'*, containing 11 original western poems.

Taking a trip to Fort Worth she entertained with her poetry during the AWA pre-awards show jam. Albertan Mike Dygert debuted his new custom-made Riversong bass



*A.K. Moss shares Oregon poems in Texas.*



*Mike Dygert (lower right) with The Western Spirit.*

in a Tom Cole-produced Facebook video featuring Hugh McLennan's The Western Spirit band. Mike reports that at just over 2" thick the acoustic is light and comfortable to play with a sound reminiscent of a standup bass.

While in B.C. to pick up the bass he joined Hugh, Gordie West, and Butch Falk for an outdoor Cowboy Church at the Barrier Fair Grounds and reports it was great to play live again. By the time this update is printed he will have done an additional performance, this one with chapter member Ed Wahl for a musical weekend in Clinton B.C. Mike is also working with the gospel group, CrossRoads, in preparation for a series of shows at senior homes in northern Alberta. Central Oregon was treated to two "personal-distance" outdoor shows by Joni Harms and her singer/songwriter daughter Olivia in early August. Joni was also recognized by the Academy of Western Artists as a finalist for "Pure Country Song" for her song



*Marilyn Tuttle and Scott Tonelson harmonizing for YouTube.*

"Merle." And speaking of AWA honors...The Hanson Family was a finalist for Western Music Group, and one of our "long-distance" members, Texan Devon Dawson, was named Western Music Female. Talented California picker, singer, and chapter member Scott Tonelson and national treasure Marilyn Tuttle graced YouTube with a harmonious rendition of Riding Down the Canyon.

Washington poet and artist Lynn Kopelke has several new paintings hanging in the Arts Alive Gallery in beautiful downtown Enumclaw, WA. He's also honored to have two pieces in the Bismark, ND Arts and Galleries Association "Square Foot" Show. Notable Exceptions concerts are continuing. Judy Coder and Jennifer Epps held four COVID Porch Concerts in eastern Washington. They turned out to be so popular that the fourth was actually sponsored by Kansas friends at the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library. The concerts were beginning to gather crowds too large to meet distancing restrictions, so they are on hold, but will likely start up again in the fall as indoor concerts for their regular audience: Wyatt Ann, Mister Moonshine Mittenpuss, and Rooty Toot Galoot. Jennifer records the performances and posts the videos shortly afterward. They also performed live in the Winthrop, WA Sunday Music in the Park series presented by Lauralee Northcott. That town is also where you'll find Lauralee's beautiful pine needle baskets exhibited as she is a featured artist at the Winthrop Gallery.



*One of Lauralee Northcott's American West pine needle baskets.*

*Continued on page 29*

## MAX EVANS (1924-2020)



Max Evans, 95, gifted New Mexico author of working cowboy novels such as “The Rounders” and “The Hi Lo Country,” died Aug. 26 in hospice care at Albuquerque’s Raymond G. Murphy VA Medical Center.

Survivors include Pat, his wife of 71 years, and their twin daughters Sheryl and Charlotte.

He was the author of more than two dozen works of fiction and nonfiction, including “The King of Taos,” a novel published this year by the University of New Mexico Press.

In 1990, the Western Writers of America presented Evans the Saddleman Award for outstanding contributions to the American West, and in 2015, he was inducted into the WWA Hall of Fame.

He was the recipient of two WWA Spur Awards for excellence in Western writing and three literary (Wrangler) awards presented by the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City.

Evans would have been 96 on Aug. 29, just a few days after he died. But he had been hospitalized since falling and breaking a hip at his Albuquerque home on June 19 and likely could not tolerate lying still in bed a day, an hour or a minute longer. Still was not Evans’ style.

He was born in Ropes, Texas, and was a working cowboy on New Mexico ranches by the time he was 11. He had his own ranch in northeastern New Mexico for a time; competed in regional rodeos as a plenty slick roper and a not-so-slick bronc rider; let fists fly in barroom fights from Magdalena to Taos, N.M.; and was an Army combat veteran of World War II.

He got rich and then got broke in the mining business, became a pretty good painter of Western scenes and cowboy life while living in Taos, switched from painting to writing while still in Taos and moved to Albuquerque in 1967.

Hollywood played a significant role in Evans’ life. “The Rounders” (1960) and “The Hi Lo Country” (1961), both novels about 20th-Century cowboy life in New Mexico, were turned into movies in 1965 and 1998 respectively.

Glenn Ford and Henry Fonda starred in the former and Woody Harrelson and Billy Crudup in the latter.

Evans wrote a few screenplays himself and doctored up some movie scripts written by others. He was a buddy of the late movie director Sam Peckinpah (“The Wild Bunch”) and played a bit part as a stagecoach guard in Peckinpah’s 1970 movie “The Ballad of Cable Hogue.”

He possessed one of the most distinctive voices in American writing and was one of the very few remaining links to the horseback cowboy era before pickup trucks changed that life forever.

*(See reviews of Max Evans’ novels “The King of Taos” and “The Rounders” in Reed’s Reading on Page 42.)*

## LEONARD RAYMOND (RAY) AMERINE (Dates Not Known)



When the Kansas Chapter of the WMA (now IWMA) was formed, we elected as our president, Ray Amerine. Ray grew up on a ranch in western Kansas and spent most of his life as a cowboy. In 1966 he married his beloved wife, Sandra Struben, and they

celebrated more than 50 years together.

Though Ray was not a performer himself, he loved western music and cowboy poetry. He loved the IWMA and avidly supported the national and regional events. Due to health issues, which included the amputation of his legs, he could no longer attend the National meeting and had to discontinue attending IWMA-KS meetings and activities.

Unfortunately, over a period of time, the chapter lost track of Ray. Several KS chapter members tried to contact him with no luck. Phone calls went directly to voice mail. Recently, IWMA-KS member, Roger Ringer began a diligent search for Ray. He located a man in Toronto, KS, who had taken care of Ray’s affairs. Roger discovered that Ray had died over a year ago but exact date is not known to us. His wife, Sandy, had also passed away previously in 2016. The ashes of both Ray and Sandy were given to Ray’s sister, Beverly, to be scattered together over the family ranch in Meade County, KS.

# ENSURING THE LEGACY OF THE WEST THROUGH YOUTH

Ray was awarded the Bill Wiley Award from the WMA in 2009.

***Editor's Note:** Ray Amerine was among the first to welcome me as a new attendee to one of my early WMA Conventions. Marvin and I spent several hours with him through that week, eating together and laughing at his wonderful stories. We always looked ahead to the next Convention and spending time with Ray. We kept in contact for a while even after his health prevented travel for him. And then sadly, we didn't. He was a cowboy gentleman and will be missed.*

## CY SCARBOROUGH (1927-2020)



Cy Scarborough passed away peacefully in his home in Durango, CO, the evening of May 18 with family and friends by his side. He died of underlying health conditions at the age of 93. Cy was born in Horatio, AR. Cy left high school to join the Army in 1945

where he served as a combat engineer. After being discharged from the Army, he returned to school to receive his GED.

In his early 20's, his dream of becoming a singing cowboy began when he started performing at the Flying W Chuckwagon in Colorado Springs. After many years, he left the Flying W with two other entertainers to establish the Bar D Chuckwagon in Durango. Even when he stopped performing full-time, he was still taking nightly performance requests and sitting in the wings listening to every show, encouraging the Wranglers to continue the Western Tradition. In 2010, Cy received the WMA Pioneer Trail Award. He attended the Convention and thrilled the audience with his performance.

Cy was preceded in death by his parents Wilbur & Maude Scarborough, one brother and one sister, son Mike Scarborough and his ex-wives Charlotte and Mary. Cy is survived by his wife of 43 years Jeanne, sons Rick and Kevin, five grandchildren, and 7 great-grandchildren, as well as other extended family and loved ones.

The purpose of this column is to share what IWMA regional chapters and others are doing to educate and inform youth about the culture and heritage of the West. The material is contributed and published to provide tools to encourage others to nurture and train young performers, thereby fulfilling the mission of the IWMA.

To quote the Troy Seals and Max D. Barnes song made a hit by George Jones, I ask, "Who's going to fill their shoes?" Whether performer or audience member, I'm pretty sure that you've smiled as I have when seeing talented young western musicians and poets take to the stage. The prospect of future generations continuing the tradition is heartening. With that in mind, and a desire to encourage young people to discover and develop their creativity and ability to tell stories through poetry and song, the members of the Columbia Chapter have launched what we hope to be an annual Youth Poetry Contest for students grade 3-12 in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and British Columbia. Through the generous donations of several members we've raised a two-year start-up budget for age-group trophy buckles, and travel and lodging allowances for winners (and family) to share their winning creations at one of our Showcase Concerts. Our "grassroots" plan is to promote the contest through visits to schools, 4-H, etc. as well as our own circles and performances (where parents and grandparents might be inspired to recruit their own). Covid-19 has delayed our opportunities, but we look forward to getting back to it. The basics of the contest are simple: Poems must be about appropriate topics such as the West, the land, ranch life, cowboys, cowgirls, livestock, rodeo, ranch pets, family history, traditions, etc. Poems are judged on creativity, originality, figurative language, appropriateness of content, and form-that is: rhyme, rhythm, voice, stanza pattern, and other elements which comprise traditional western or cowboy poetry. Entries are submitted through our chapter website [iwmacolumbia.com](http://iwmacolumbia.com), where full details are available.

Contributed by Tom Swearingen

*President, IWMA Columbia Chapter*

# In The Spotlight...

by Marvin O'Dell

...DJs overseas are asking the Spotlight to remind you who are sending CDs overseas to mark them as “**gifts**” on the customs form. If instead you place a value on them, they will be taxed. One DJ has told us he had to spend \$40 to pick up one CD; consequently, he is not sure he will bother to pick up any more of them. **Keep your music played on overseas stations by noting that they are gifts.**

...Western Jubilee Recording Company's catalogue of recordings has become a part of Smithsonian Folkworks. IWMA members whose works are included in this induction are **The Sons of the San Joaquin, Juni Fisher, Dave Stamey, and Don Edwards.** The poetry of **Waddie Mitchell** will also go into the archives.

...**Red Steagall** has won his ninth Wrangler award from the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum. The award for Best Western Composition has gone to “Hats Off to the Cowboys” from Red's album of the same title released in 2019. His show “Red Steagall is Somewhere West of Wall Street” will begin its 8th year on RFD-TV in 2021.

...Santa Fe, NM songwriter **Paul Kelly** was named one of three winners in the Podunk Bluegrass Festival Songwriting Contest in Goshen, CT. The festival was slated for August 6-9 but had to be canceled.

...**Andy Hedges** was invited to participate in the VIRTUAL Philadelphia Folk Festival which took place in August.

...**Les Buffham** and **Dan McCorison** have co-written three songs that will be featured on Dan's forthcoming album. Les has also co-written a song with **Tom Poley** of the group **Way Out West** which will appear on a soon-to-be-released album by the group featuring songs about Arizona.

...**Dave and Carolyn Martin** have been doing Facebook Livestreams of their music since late March. Having lost a ton of work due to the COVID-19 virus, the duo began reaching out twice a week to those who would tune into their stream. If you'd like to tune in, go to [www.facebook.com/carolynmartinmusic](http://www.facebook.com/carolynmartinmusic) every Wednesday from 7-9 EST (that's 6-8 central, 5-7 Mountain, and 4-9 for the folks on the left coast), and each Sunday from 4-6 Eastern, etc.

...Even with the current Covid-19 situation, **Buffalo Bryan Marr** has continued to perform at small outdoor gatherings to raise funds for his favorite charitable entities. This is done ONLY while the host organization is observing commonsense distance and hygiene requirements.

...**Pegie Douglas** has managed to keep playing during these difficult times. In September, she performed at the South Dakota State Fair opening for Sherwin Linton. She also played the Hot Springs Farmers Market with bluegrass/cowboy musician **Ken Amerson**, and at the Homestake Opera House in Lead, SD for the Lead Gold Camp Jubilee.

...Instead of staying home and doing nothing, **Bill Clark** decided to go out and make videos. He started a Ranch mini-series by going to ranches near his home. The series can be viewed on his Facebook page each Thursday morning. Bill also has finished a new album titled *Wild and Free* with all original songs of his.

...In anticipation of a future poetry album, **Teresa Burleson** has been writing a lot of poems during the pandemic. She recited some of the new poems at a show in August in Cleburne, TX called “Cowboy Swing” that included **Devon Dawson, Jessie Robertson, Kristyn Harris, David Hansford, Stan Mahler, and Brook Wallace Deaton.** Social distancing was practiced.

...**Vic Anderson** has been playing a weekly single gig at The Slab, an outdoor pub in Estes Park, CO. He has written a few poems and three or four songs while waiting out the pandemic. A song he wrote 35 years ago titled “Fly” is suddenly doing well in Europe, going as high as #1 on some charts.

...**Mike Mahaney** is in discussions with Paramount Television about a guest role in Season 4 of the series *Yellowstone*. Mahaney has auditioned with Miller Lite for the role of a cowboy singing a song.

...For three weeks this summer, **Buffalo Bill Boycott & Dr. Jo** stayed very busy. Twice they drove to and from the National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center in Baker City, OR. In between the Oregon Trail shows, they drove

into Wyoming for three shows in three different towns for a total of 33 outdoor performances.

...**Peggy Malone** has been whiling away the hours during the time of COVID watching her pumpkin patch grow, feeding her horse tank goldfish, and...making masks for friends and relatives.

...During quarantine, **Steve Deming** has written a book, *Secrets of an Uber Driver*. Although the book is clearly of his experiences driving Uber for five years before the quarantine, it is filled with cowboy Poetry and his experiences riding horses. Steve is currently searching for a publisher for the book.

...After watching gigs cancel during the pandemic, **Juni Fisher** tuned up her 37-year-old sewing machine to make a few facemasks for family and friends. As of mid-August, she had made over 550 of them. Juni says that music has been her main source of income for 15 years, so she looked for a way to supply something that folks need so she could keep caring for her horses and paying the mortgage. The answer was: face masks.

...**Larry Wilder** has been doing concerts on the cul-de-sac where he lives. Friends and neighbors bring their camp chairs and sit spaced appropriately. He has also written a tune for Father's Day at church.

...**Lori Beth Brooke** released her western swing album, *Texas Star* in August. It includes 15 songs in the Western and Western Swing style, ten of which are originals. The album features yodeling and Western accordion over an ensemble of bass, guitar, steel guitar, fiddle, and mandolin. Produced by **Dave Martin**, it also includes cameo performances by **3 Trails West**, **Judy Coder**, and **Carolyn Martin**. For more info, go to [www.LoriBethBrooke.com](http://www.LoriBethBrooke.com).

...Despite having multiple performances cancelled this year, Scott Glen Lambertsen and Mark E. Seeley (aka **The Fall River Boys**) have been able to perform at their usual summer gig at the Meadow Vue Ranch in Island Park, ID. Twice a week, the ranch (a non-profit kid's horse ranch camp) puts on a rodeo and steak barbecue for tourists and others with entertainment from Scott and Mark.

...The Academy of Western Artists' Western Swing Female Artist of the Year award has gone to **Kristyn Harris**. Other winners were: **Johnny Angel**, Western Swing Male Artist of the Year; **Lonnie Spiker**, Western Swing Album of the

Year; **Clint Bradley**, Western Music Male Artist of the Year; **Devon Dawson**, Western Music Female Artist of the Year; **Allen & Jill Kirkham**, Western Music Duo of the Year; **Johnny Minick & the Stewart Bros.**, Western Music Album of the Year; **Gil Prather**, Western Music Song of the Year; **Abby Payne**, Young Artist of the Year.

...Singer/songwriter **Doc Mehl** has published his first book of cowboy poetry: *Good Medicine: Read Two Poems and Call Me in the Morning*. Twenty years in the making, it is a collection of 95 poems, with accompanying artwork by 32 artists and photographers. For more info, go to [www.DocMehl.com](http://www.DocMehl.com). Doc's latest song is "The COVID-19 Blues."

...**Doris Daley** has published a book of her own: *That's a Good Answer: Wise Words from Wonderful People*. Her book is full of good answers to life's puzzling questions, and it's a safe bet you'll know quite a few of the contributors. Information is at [www.DorisDaley.com](http://www.DorisDaley.com).

...**Allen and Jill Kirkham** celebrated the National Day of the Cowboy by performing a live musical "History of Traditional American Western Music" as South Dakota humanities scholars at the High Plains Western Heritage Center in Spearfish, SD.

...**Mag Mawhinney** has done some writing during the pandemic. She posted a love song titled "On the Other Side of Lonely" on Facebook, and **Ron Christopher** from California and **Bernadette Ducharme** from British Columbia created different melodies. Ron has also created a melody for another of Mag's posted tunes as has **Hugh McLennan**.

...**Igor "The Jazz Cowboy"** is in a lockdown Senior Community in Phoenix, AZ. Thus, with over 600 residents, he enjoys a "captive audience" every week. As a one-man-band, he plays guitar and banjo with foot percussion plus harmonica, kazoo, and a headstock mounted slide whistle which enables him to continue strumming chords.

...During the summer, **Annie Tezuka** was featured in an official music video for indie pop artist and singer/songwriter Perfume Genius. The project was part of a contest held by the artist where film directors were asked to submit their personal visualizations to one of the songs from his newest album. Annie was cast in a solo role in one of the winning entries.

*Continued on page 22*

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

*Continued from page 21*

...**Tom Swearingen** has announced the publication of his first poetry book. *Reflection* is a 106-page collection of 46 of his most popular poems with 32 illustrations by award-winning artist Elizabeth Zimmerman. Tom is scheduled to be the featured author at an upcoming monthly "Writer's Talk" program at The Dalles Art Center in The Dalles, OR.

...**Clint Bradley** hit the road in January and February with his band and was able to complete a very successful Scandinavian theatre tour before the travel bans and lock-down started. They then played a series of shows in Germany and Holland, returning to England with only a day to spare before the lockdown. Pre-production for a new western album is delayed due to uncertainty about the future.

...*Bandida*, a music video from **Carol Markstrom** and filmmaker Anita Crane, was a finalist in the Wild Bunch Film Festival held in conjunction with the 2020 Rex Allen Days in October in Willcox, AZ. *Bandida* was screened at the event and Carol was a featured performer.

... *Campfire Sessions* (a weekly show produced by Hohner Harmonicas on Facebook) is a fun hour of songs and storytelling broadcast from **Gary Allegretto's** back-porch balcony in historic Laurel Canyon (CA). It all happens just up the road from Tom Mix's celebrated log cabin hangout where he entertained friends including Wyatt Earp in the early 1900s (later owned by the notorious Frank Zappa in the 60s).

...**Tom Poley** has recorded a new CD with his new band Dharmapoke. It features a timely song co-written with **Les Buffham** about issues on our southern border. The CD released in September. You can view a lively video of Tom and Dharmapoke performing his song *Bacanora* (in Spanish) on YouTube at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t\\_o\\_dr74RKS](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t_o_dr74RKS).

...**Aspen Black** and **Alice Black** spent most of the summer making video performances in place of cancelled library programs. Aspen has written a variety of new songs, and mother and daughter have been playing together a lot at home, improving their guitar skills.

...A new tune has been recorded during the pandemic by **Michael Roth**. The song is titled "I Must Ride." You can hear it at <https://easyheroes.com/single/17203/i-must-ride>. He also had the opportunity to do some recording at the University of New Mexico recently, courtesy of Prof. Sam Negri, who teaches a digital media course at UNM.

...It's the 15th year of the *Best of America By Horseback* on RFD and The Cowboy Channel with host **Del Shields**. Some shows were cancelled this year, but several events were still held. Also, Del is entering his third year of writing a new cowboy poem every Monday morning which is being published in local newspapers.

...**Leah Sawyer** has adopted a wild mustang. She has 100 days to gentle her beautiful "May" and prep her for competition. Also, a new recording project is underway for **Simple Gifts**; meanwhile, the family has been busy with several different online concerts and efforts to help charitable organizations with fund-raising. **David Sawyer** is keeping busy drawing caricatures and delivering electronic files with the art.

...**Mike Craig of Trails & Rails** recently appeared in a radio chat session with **Sam Harris** of CVFM Country, broadcasting over England and Scotland. Several tracks from his CD *Cowboy Boots* were played during the show. A few weeks later, the entire band went on the show.

...The Jackson Hole Hootenanny began in 1957 by skier and writer/musician Bill Briggs. The "Hoot" showcased traditional and old-time Americana and western musicians picking their tunes beneath the sparkling night skies of Jackson Hole, WY on Monday nights. Fast forward over six decades (during 2020 Covid-19) and **LeeLee Robert** and others keep the "Hoot" alive on ZOOM. Here's a sample: <https://youtu.be/Vj7dZqmfcHU>.

...In early August, the YMCA of the Rockies Library in Estes Park (CO), hosted an outdoor concert for its guests, featuring **The McDailey's** Rural Roots Trio. The audience was masked and socially distanced. During the performance two bull elk strolled through keeping socially distanced as well.

...**Janice Deardorff** has been working with award-winning Arizona author Nancy E. Turner on a new album, *The Songs of Sarah Prine, AZ Pioneer Woman*, based on a trilogy by Turner which includes *These is My Words*. Earlier this summer, the documentary *Voices of Vail*, which includes Janice's song "All Aboard", received The Albert B. Corey Award, the most prestigious national recognition for achievement in the preservation of state and local history.

...**Jan Schiferl** has been working on a children's book, *Letta, The Littlest Pony*, written about her miniature

pony, Letta, who greets children when they come to the ranch. Letta feels sad that all the other ranch horses can do things that she cannot but discovers why she is special just the way God created her! For more info: [www.schiferlswjranch.com](http://www.schiferlswjranch.com).

...It's been a busy summer for **J. Clayton Read**. Along with performing at private parties each week, he has worked on two different films for producer Bill Foster while being named to the Board Of Directors of the Chisholm Trail Outdoor Museum in Cleburne, TX as well as Director of Music and Entertainment. Read also organized a fundraiser for the Children Advocacy Center of Cleburne featuring **Miss Devon & the Outlaw, Kristyn Harris, Mark Abbot, Lori Beth Brooke, K.R. Wood, and Miss Devon & the Texas River Valley Band**. Tens of thousands of dollars were raised.

...**Connie Dover** has also been doing the Facebook video thing this summer with songs performed at various locations including Yellowstone National Park and Clark's Canyon as well as her living room, dining room, etc. You can watch the series *Luddite Studios* here: [www.conniedoverofficial@facebook.com](http://www.conniedoverofficial@facebook.com).

...**Claudia Nygaard** has launched a live-stream series and is doing a show each Sunday evening through 2020. *Sunday Sundown Shows at Seven Central* draws from several hundred of Claudia's songs and is thematic. On November 8th, in honor of IWMA which would have gathered that weekend, she will debut the songs for *To Race The Wind*, a western album she is recording. To request a song and be kept up to date on the streaming schedule, sign up for her mailing list at [www.claudianygaard.com](http://www.claudianygaard.com).

...**Mae Camp** has been staying busy by jamming with her son who lives in the same complex as she. They also meet each evening to play Scrabble.

...The grandkids of proud grandparents **Gary and Jean Prescott** are expected to soon deliver the Prescotts with their fourth great grand-child.

... **The Carr Family Cowboy Band** is working on a new CD of original songs. Also, Ronn W. Carr and wife Judy have a new granddaughter, Ernie, born March 8th. She is the daughter to Anna and George. Walter Carr married Kelsy on June 27th. Abby and Myles are keeping busy on their ranch during these times of COVID-19. 🐾



FOR MORE INFO  
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FOR OUR THIRD CD  
"ARIZONA STARS",



INTRODUCING IWMA AND ARIZONA CHAPTER MEMBERS "RUSTED SPURS WEST", A COWBOY/WESTERN SWING ACOUSTIC TRIO THAT HAS BEEN ENTERTAINING THROUGHOUT THE SOUTHWEST WITH A UNIQUE BRAND OF HARMONY, POETRY AND HUMOR. THE GROUP FEATURES SLIM ON BASS, MS PATTI ON ACCORDION, AND TEX ON GUITAR.



# 2020 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE



## JONI HARMS

*By O.J. Sikes*

Joni Harms and Emmylou Harris were the only two women individually signed to the Warner Western record label, home to numerous members of the Western Music Hall of Fame. Joni recorded her award-winning CD, *Cowgirl Dreams*, for Warner Western in 1998, and while she was with that label, she was featured in *People* magazine, *Billboard*, *USA Today* and other prominent publications. The CD was selected by the *Tennessean* as one of the Top Ten that year, wedged between Alan Jackson and George Strait!

Her fan-base has spread throughout the West, from her ranch in Oregon, homesteaded in 1872 by her great-great grandfather, around the world to Ireland (where she recorded a 2 CD set of her concerts while on tour there), Australia, New Zealand, England, France, Germany, Norway, Latvia, Italy and other countries where her “live” performances have drawn enthusiastic audience response.

Joni’s many compositions, especially “Bless the Farmer” and “Let’s Put the Western Back in the Country,” illustrate her roots and her soul. They’ve been well received by DJs and the record buying public because they strike a chord with audiences who can relate to the land and who love Western music. A fan of Western swing as well, some of her most popular recordings have an uplifting shuffle beat; songs like “Two-Steppin’ Texas Blue” and “Cowboy Coffee,” loved by fans everywhere.

She has recorded 14 CDs, has won multiple honors from the International Western Music Association and the Academy of Western Artists, and has been the featured musical guest at the American Quarter Horse Finals numerous times and elsewhere across the West. She has appeared on the *Ralph Emery Show* and the televised portion of the *Grand Ole Opry* in Nashville and in Carnegie Hall in New York City, along the way. And she’s rightfully proud that her singer songwriter daughter, Olivia, is following in her footsteps, having just completed her third CD!

““ Joni’s many compositions, especially “Bless the Farmer” and “Let’s Put the Western Back in the Country,” illustrate her roots and her soul. ””

# 2020 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE



## FRED HOWARD & NAT VINCENT (Composers)

By O.J. Sikes

In 1930, Fred Howard and Nat Vincent were in the cast of a “live” radio show in California when the show’s producer received a wire from a man in Texas with a challenge: if Howard & Vincent could write a song and sing it on the air before the show ended that night, he would award them \$250. The two men got to work immediately and started developing an idea, based on recollections of having visited a ranch in Texas, remembering the beauty of the sage in bloom and the experience of sitting around the campfire in the evening, drinking coffee from a can. Before the show ended, they completed the song, performed it on the air and claimed their prize! The very popular Beverly Hill Billies recorded the song almost immediately!

That wasn’t the first song the duo, also known as “The Happy Chappies,” had written, but it became one of the best-known. They aren’t always listed in the credits, but they wrote the chorus to Curly Fletcher’s “Strawberry Roan,” another Western classic, and they collaborated with noted songwriter Billy Hill on “Rock Me to Sleep in My Rocky Mountain Home,” a song recorded by the Sons of the Pioneers in the 1930s and by The Jimmy Wakely Trio and Rex Allen, among others, in the 1940s. Rex Allen also recorded their “My Arizona Home” and “Mellow Mountain Moon,” and Gene Autry liked to sing the latter on his Melody Ranch radio show.

“Me and My Burro” was another of their better-known, frequently recorded compositions, and their very popular “My Pretty Quadroon” was recorded by the Pioneers as well as The Beverly Hill Billies in the mid-30’s. In later years, the Sons of the Pioneers, Andy Parker & the Plainsmen and others enjoyed singing “By a Window at the End of the Lane” on their radio shows. And Gene Autry & the Ranch Boys recorded and/or broadcast their composition, “Wonder Valley.” While their career in Western music began nearly 100 years ago, their songs are still being sung and recorded today.

““ While their career in Western music began nearly 100 years ago, their songs are still being sung and recorded today. ””

# 2020 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE



## THE RANCH BOYS

*By O.J. Sikes*

Ken Carson, Raymond Courtney (aka Joe “Curley” Bradley) and Jack Ross met in the early 1930s when Bradley and Carson worked with the Beverly Hill Billies in California. Late in 1933, they formed the Ranch Boys trio, which actually evolved from an earlier group with the same name.

They had a smooth vocal blend, accompanied by Carson’s acoustic guitar. Instead of writing their own material, they focused on singing and recording traditional cowboy songs and Western songs composed by others, many of which were soon to become Western standards or classics. In 1941, Decca released a 78rpm album of Ranch Boys recordings of Billy Hill compositions and before that, in addition to a large number of “singles,” Decca had released an album of medleys of early Western songs.

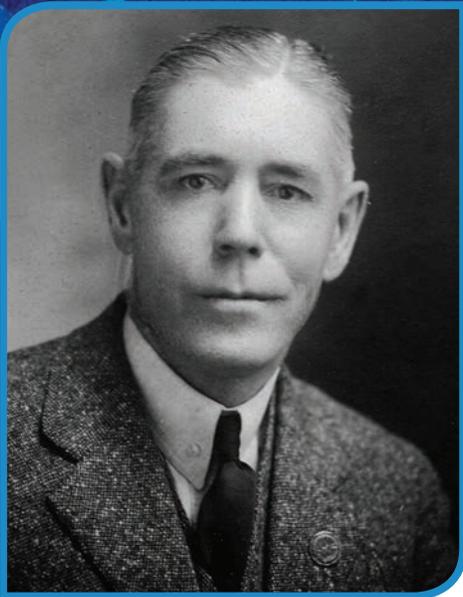
On Sept. 7, 1934, they had recorded Bob Nolan’s “Tumbling Tumbleweeds” for Decca in Chicago one month after the Sons of the Pioneers recorded their initial version for the same label in August, 1934, in Los Angeles. But Decca released the Ranch Boys’ record first, on October 9, so it became the first commercial release of that Western classic. Their work on film with Gene Autry (In Old Monterey in 1939) resulted in a large following among members of the Gene Autry fan club. In the film, the trio sang “Tumbling Tumbleweeds” in three-quarter time, which sets that version apart from all other recordings of that song.

In 1938, the trio drew considerable national attention to themselves and to Western music when they carried out a publicity stunt, riding horseback across the country, ending up on the steps of City Hall in New York City where they presented greetings from the Governor of California to NY’s Mayor LaGuardia, followed by appearances at the Madison Square Garden rodeo. They had stopped to perform their Western music many times along the way, broadcasting remotely for the WLS National Barndance.

Moving from the coast to Chicago, the trio worked on the very popular Tom Mix radio series, which helped them establish a national reputation and fan base, but the trio dissolved in 1941 when “Curley” Bradley was offered the role of Tom Mix on the radio. The following year, Ken Carson joined the Sons of the Pioneers, but re-issues of their recordings kept the work of the Ranch Boys before the public long after the group broke up. And many of their recordings are available on CDs today!

““ Their work on film with Gene Autry (In Old Monterey in 1939) resulted in a large following among members of the Gene Autry fan club. ””

# 2020 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE



“ Along with collecting cowboy songs, he wrote some of his own that are still sung today and they are found in his songbooks. ”

## NATHAN HOWARD “JACK” THORP

*By Rex Rideout*

Jack Thorp rode for cattle companies in the last years of what was known as the “open range.” He would ride looking for stray horses across county and state lines and usually would find them. He also found cowpunchers singing songs he had never heard. In time he went on what he called his “song hunt” riding over 1500 miles through parts of Texas and New Mexico and wrote down what he found in a notebook. He went on to publish the first book focused exclusively on cowboy songs in 1908 and in a sense created the idea of it being a genre unto itself. What he was seeking was cowboy songs and no other. The title of his book reflects this clearly, “Songs of the Cowboys.” He would expand this collection in 1921 with a second edition published through Houghton Mifflin.

He also published books that tell of his ranching days, “Tales of the Chuckwagon,” 1926; and an autobiography co-written with Neil Clark, “Pardner of the Wind” published posthumously in 1945. Jack got around and met some who stand out in the history of the old West, Pat Garrett, Bell Starr, Judge Roy Bean. He befriended other writers, Charlie Siringo, Will James, Eugene Manlove Rhodes and later in his life, J. Frank Dobie who wrote a tribute to Jack in his own book, “The Longhorns.”

Along with collecting cowboy songs, he wrote some of his own that are still sung today and they are found in his songbooks: “Little Joe the Wrangler”, “Chopo”, “The Pecos River Queen”, “Whose Old Cow?” and “Speckles”, all of which ended up in John Lomax’s 1910 Cowboy Songs without credit to the author along with other material seemingly lifted entirely from Thorp’s book. An annoyed Thorp would later refer to Lomax only as “a very learned professor.”

Of the legacy of Jack Thorp, the most revered is his song “Little Joe the Wrangler.” It is found in almost every cowboy songbook and has been recorded by many including Jules Vern Allen, Tex Ritter, Cisco Houston, The Sons of the Pioneers, Marty Robbins, Don Edwards, Chris LeDoux, Red Steagall, Michael Martin Murphey, Rex Allen, Rex Allen Jr. & Riders in the Sky. There is even a 1942 motion picture titled Little Joe the Wrangler starring Tex Ritter. Baxter Black says of Little Joe, “America has a wonderful soft spot and a reverence for the downtrodden. And here comes this kid, and suddenly his world changes. Cowboys are taking him in and treating him fair and square. And it’s the promise of hope. He now has a future.” Recently there was a parody of Little Joe (Surly Joe) sung by Tim Blake Nelson in the 2018 Coen brothers film, “The Ballad of Buster Scruggs.” Little could Jack Thorp have imagined how far his song search would ramble long after he was gone.

# FROM the TRAIL

## GATHERING & EVENT ORGANIZERS WEIGH IN

## MEETING CHALLENGES IN CHALLENGING TIMES

### *Project Management, Staying in Control*

*By Jim Buchanan*

My observation and communication with a number of our Gatherings and Festivals leads me to believe many are held together by a precious few very dedicated volunteers. And some use a paid staff person to do a lot of the work. If it is working for you, good! As the future beckons and we all work to continue presenting cowboy poetry and music, I thought I would share some insight to the ways we have survived 32 years and look forward to many more!

The Arizona Cowboy Poets Gathering (ACPG) has 50 plus dedicated volunteers led by a 9-member volunteer Board of Directors who are all volunteers themselves and who serve on some of over 20 all-volunteer committees performing over 400 tasks. How do we do it without a paid staff person to coordinate all those volunteers? We have evolved and grown to where we found we needed a “critical path” or “Gantt chart.” Most of us have heard the terms but many of us are not familiar with them and, most importantly, we don’t know where to begin. This is the same process used by professional project managers. Technology advances have helped us and can help you if you want it to.

We use ZOHO® project management software which is an online system available by subscription for what we have found is a reasonable annual fee for the value we receive. The advantage of using online software is the developer designs, updates and services it. In our case, multiple “authorized users” can access the project “gathering planning.” You do need a volunteer who will “manage” your ZOHO® project and is willing to do reports.

Within ZOHO® project management, ACPG has over 400 “tasks” assigned to more than 20 committees with someone on the committee designated and authorized as the “contact person.” The contact person accesses ZOHO® online and the list of tasks assigned to them or their committee, and then updates the task as having been completed or makes other notations. Each task has an opening date and closing date which helps tremendously in making sure tasks are completed on time. Our planning coordinator volunteer creates new plans each year, provides useful reporting on our planning progress, and detailed updates of what is on tap for the immediate future. This establishes expectations for what needs to be completed to stay on track. It allows us to

determine if our planning process is “in control” or if changes are needed to circumvent problems early in the process. The objective is “no surprises.”

ACPG uses standard agendas and progress reports presented with PowerPoint® during our monthly committee meetings which currently are held virtually through software most of us have heard of by now, ZOOM® virtual meetings. ZOOM® and ZOHO® are unrelated and do entirely different things but have similar names that can lead to confusion. We strive to share as much knowledge as possible with and amongst volunteers. This gives them the satisfaction that they are part of a well-organized, winning team and that their contribution matters.

When the Pandemic hit we knew we might be faced with the very difficult decision to cancel our Gathering, which we ultimately did. Early this year we created an “Exit plan” in ZOHO® listing 100 tasks that needed to be completed in just 2 weeks “if” we canceled. That helped us tremendously when we did cancel knowing who to notify and what they needed to be notified of. Committee volunteers, performers, sponsors, media and many others all needed timely notification. Committee volunteers were one task, performers were one task, etc., yet we still had 100 tasks to complete. We also created a financial model to understand the bottom-line impact of cancelling at different points in time. Interestingly we know of three different instances locally where performers were not notified of other canceled events where they scheduled to perform.

We are convinced that our formal planning process, along with utilizing current technology, will preserve the Arizona Cowboy Poets Gathering far into the future.

There is a lot more to this if you feel your gathering or festival may want to use ZOHO® and/or ZOOM®. The online resources will help greatly and if you have specific questions that we may help you with, please send me an email, [jimbuchanan@cableone.net](mailto:jimbuchanan@cableone.net). We wish all of you success as we emerge from the Pandemic!

---

*Jim Buchanan is a current member of the Board of Directors for the Arizona Cowboy Poets Gathering and a 30-year volunteer member of the ACPG event.*

# Chapter Update

*Continued from page 17*

The lovely and talented Lori Brooke contracted with Notable Exceptions to participate in her upcoming album; Judy provided some vocals, and Jennifer created the artwork. Jennifer entered the IWMA-KS Chapter virtual cowboy poetry contest. The piece "The Encounter" was actually Wyatt Ann's story; Judy took dictation (the first time she's written a poem that won't be set to music), and Jennifer tells the humorous story. Oregon poet Tom Swearingen used the better part of the past months at home turning pandemic into "pandemic" with the publication of *Reflection*, a 106-page collection of 46 of his most popular poems. The book is selling well and receiving good reviews. Although Tom's in-person shows were canceled or postponed, he has participated in several livestream social media concerts and programs (some from horseback) and has others coming up. He also reports gratitude to the Arizona Cowboy Poets Gathering, the Durango Cowboy Poetry Gathering, and other event producers who have contracted him for 2021 after having to cancel this year. Our IWMA Columbia Chapter Youth Poetry Contest has rolled into next year. Details and entry (2021 deadline September 1) can be found at [IWMAcolumbia.org](http://IWMAcolumbia.org).



*Tom Swearingen shares horsback poetry for a Facebook video.*

## EAST COAST CHAPTER

**President: Aspen Black**  
[aspen@aspenblackcowgirl.com](mailto:aspen@aspenblackcowgirl.com)

The IWMAECC has no news to report of chapter activity. A few chapter members, however, have some individual performances coming up, but that's about all. CV-19 has put most everything on hold here on the east coast.

## KANSAS CHAPTER

**President: Orin Friesen**  
[orin@banjoranch.com](mailto:orin@banjoranch.com)

Most of the live music in Kansas has come to a standstill due to the COVID-19 pandemic. One bright spot has been the Kansas Cowboy Poetry Contest, headed up by IWMA-KS member Ron Wilson. This year's contest was done completely online. There were contestants from ten states and Canada. The competition was tough, and the scores were close, but it was a high-quality contest. Here are the final results:

### Serious –

- #1 Dennis Flynn, Decatur, TX
- #2 P.W. Conway, Simi Valley, CA
- #3 J.D. Nelson, Beaver, OK

### Humorous –

- #1 George Ray Russell, Boulder, CO
- #2 P.W. Conway, Simi Valley, CA
- #3 Scott Wiswell, Valley Center, KS

The People's Choice winter was Daniel Hutchinson of Eureka, MT. All of the winners received an Awards Certificate signed by the Governor of Kansas, and the champions in each category received the coveted Governor's Buckle. There is also a Youth Roundup poetry contest, with entries still being accepted at the time of this writing.

## NEW MEXICO CHAPTER

**President: Ralph Estes**  
[ralph@ralphestes.com](mailto:ralph@ralphestes.com)

Like other chapters, New Mexico cancelled scheduled showcases, and also our brewpub open mics. These biweekly gatherings, which attracted amateur as well as commercially successful artists, were great for socializing among members and getting some stage experience. All gone, alas. But not all gone. The open mics, now labeled "Western Music get-togethers" and in a great new outdoor venue, returned beginning September 7. Casa Vieja, a 1750 hacienda repurposed as a brewpub surrounded by tree-shaded patios, is our enthusiastic host, with appropriate COVID-19 precautions, of course. Meanwhile the chapter members have not just



*Casa Vieja patio.*

been filing their nails. A sampling: Barbara Alt published a children's book, *Rose*, and dived right into its sequel *Lily*; may be out by the time you read this. Bobbi Jean Bell hasn't slowed a bit. Issues that couldn't be celebrated outdoors got attention on her Saturday radio shows ([www.KUPR.org](http://www.KUPR.org)). Like National Day Of The Cowboy, Women's Suffrage, Date Night At Home, and World Yodel Day. Meanwhile our other radio DJs and announcers keep the airwaves, at least, more than alive during COVID. Every Wednesday evening (6:30pm) Doug Figgs plays the best western music on KYRN 102.1 FM in Socorro. From down Deming way Totsie Slovie gives us "The Real West from the Old West" on AM 1230 KOTS. Buffalo Bill (Boycott) & Dr. Jo (Orr), NM chapter members and half-year Wyoming residents, had an impressive schedule, with COVID dispersal, at the National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center, as well as a number of library, church, and private venues. And like many, Steve Cormier turned to online concerts including the Santa Fe Traditional Music Festival. Margaret Crowl and Dave Levenson performed a series of ten "Driveway Concerts" in the front yard of their home in Rio Rancho.

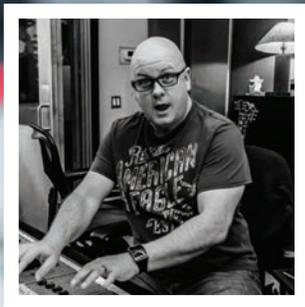


*Dr. Jo and Buffalo Bill*

*Continued on page 32*

# BEHIND THE STUDIO DOOR

with Bryan Kuban



## "SO YA WANNA BUILD AN INEXPENSIVE HOME STUDIO, PART #3"

We Have our Computer, our interface, nice microphones, cables and stands. Lets treat our recording/monitoring space.

### "Sound Treatments"

So, every situation is different when it comes to sound treatments. Egg cartons will not work! Depending on your space, different treatments are required. Let's make a scenario: Say you have a 12' x 16' room. The first thing I would do is make it multifunctional. If you are lucky, the room already has hardwood, tile, or stone flooring. If it doesn't, rip out the carpet and install laminate wood flooring. It is relatively inexpensive (approximately \$1.75/sq ft.; about \$350.00 with glue and overages, uninstalled). Hopefully you are handy. Once the flooring is installed you will need a couple of area rugs approximately 4' x 8' (**Approximately \$50.00 each for inexpensive rugs**). Rugs will be used where needed to slightly deaden the room depending on what you are recording. Drums need a lively room, while vocal tracking requires a dead space.

The walls need hanging diffusers to absorb sound from reflecting. I recommend building (8) 4'x4' frames and staple material around one side, fill it with insulation and then staple the other side with more material. Have fun with this, you can create a colorful fun vibe for your space. Hang them up on the walls and make them easy to remove if you want a more lively space at times.

The last thing you will want to do is build Bass traps in the corners. If you have (4) corners in the room, you will need (4) bass traps. Let's say your ceiling in the room is 8' tall. What you are trying to accomplish is to fill the corners with sound absorption materials so that the bass doesn't overwhelm the room. A simple 7' x 3' frame with the same technique as the diffusers will do the trick by leaning them into the corners. This is a budget way to make the bass traps, but they are still very effective. I built all my diffusers and traps at a cost of approximately \$400.00 for all the materials. That was for a 14' x 10' space.

**Starter Microphone Set:** Approximately \$700.00 new

**Microphone Stands:** Approximately \$100.00 new

**Cable setup:** \$259.99 new

**12' x 16' Room build out:** approximately \$850.00 new

**Computer and monitors:** approximately \$1675.00

**Now our Home Studio minus our software** is coming in at approximately \$3,585.00

Seems pricey but this is less than two of the high-end preamplifiers in my studio.

### What is a D.A.W.?

D.A.W. stands for Digital Audio Workstation. This is the software used to record, edit, mix, and master on a computer. There are more than a few really good D.A.W. products out there. I am going to introduce you to a few from novice to professional in complexity.

First, the principal operations of DAW software are the same in most products. You have input and output which is called I/O. This is the routing of how signals enter the computer through your interface and into the software. They all have bussing in which you can subgroup instruments such as percussion, strings, vocals, etc., so that you can control volumes or process sounds in groups.

**Garage Band** by Apple (\$00.00 free with apple computer): Garage band is a great introduction to recording software that was released over 10 years ago and has morphed into a fantastic introductory recording DAW. It is very easy to use and it has lots of great sounds available if you have an external keyboard controller (approximately \$50.00 used at your favorite pawn shop). Garage band comes with a substantial loop library with some very usable drum loops as well as preconstructed performance-based loops. The drummer option is a fantastic realistic sounding midi-drum set channel that when enabled can follow your performance on whatever instrument you are playing (as long as you play along with the click and your tempo is close).

*Continued on page 32*

# CHRONICLE OF THE OLD WEST

"The Old West Is A Time And Place Of The Heart"

## SAMUEL MAVERICK

BY DAKOTA LIVESAY



In 1835 Samuel A. Maverick moved to the San Antonio, Texas area, and started practicing law. He was even one of the signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence.

As the story goes, a neighbor owed him \$1,200. With no ready cash, the neighbor offered to pay him in cattle. So, reluctantly, on June 11, 1844, Samuel agreed to take 400 head

of cattle. Not wanting to deal with the cattle, Samuel hired someone to take care of them. At first the hired hand branded the calves with Samuel's MK brand. But soon things got out of hand, and many of the calves went unbranded.

Maverick left them to be managed by an African American family who subsequently moved from the Gulf coast to the Conquista Ranch on the San Antonio River, where the cattle were left to multiply, graze, and wander away. Over a decade later enough had wandered off or been taken by others, that the number of head supposedly belonging to Maverick remained the same.

By 1854, Samuel's unbranded cattle were roaming all over the area and his neighbors started complaining, stating that if Samuel didn't do something about them, he wouldn't have any.

Finally, in 1856, Samuel sold his cattle to another rancher. The cattle were

sold on the basis of "range delivery." This meant the rancher bought an approximate number of cattle that happened to be located on the open range. Whenever the new owner found an unbranded cow, he claimed them as Samuel Maverick's cattle, or "Maverick's." By 1857, people in the area were referring to unbranded cattle as "mavericks."

But the term didn't come into general use until after the Civil War when the cattlemen returned to find tens of thousands of unbranded cattle roaming the plains. During this time, although taking a branded cow was a hanging offence, to take an unbranded cow or a maverick wasn't rustling. And this is the way many a cattle ranch started out.

It's also interesting to note that as a result of this we acquired a new word for obstinate people...mavericks.

**Dakota Livesay** is the host of a daily and weekly syndicated radio show with five million listeners per week. He's also the publisher of *Chronicle of the Old West*, a monthly newspaper comprised of actual 1800's newspaper articles. In addition, he writes a weekly syndicated newspaper and Internet column called This Week In The Old West.



The Happy Trails Children's Foundation is very pleased to dedicate Silver Screen Legend XXIII to Buffalo Bill Cody, a magnificent icon of the American West!

### DRAWING FEATURES

A DELUXE ENGRAVED SAA .45 COLT WITH 7-1/2" BARREL AND A COMMEMORATIVE BUFFALO BILL WINCHESTER MODEL 94 .30-30 RIFLE, COLORFUL NATIVE AMERICAN STYLE BEADED HOLSTER, BELT & CUSTOM DAMASCUS KNIFE with MATCHING SCABBARD FROM THE SHOP OF JOHN BIANCHI

**Tickets \$10 each OR 11 for \$100**

The Drawing will be held DECEMBER 5, 2020  
**YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE PRESENT TO WIN!**

Learn more about the Foundation and the annual drawing at

**HAPPYTRAILS.ORG**

Or see ad located on page 41 in this issue.

# Chapter Update

*Continued from page 29*

Kacey and Jenna Thunborg seem to be everywhere in spite of COVID - even doing a bluegrass (?) show. They were on hand to christen the chapter's "Western Music get-togethers" at Corrales' Casa Viejas. Even though it's a pandemic, Ruidosco's Flying J Wranglers continued their ranch show and dinner most every night, with tables widely separated, theatre with spaced seating, staff all in masks.



*Kacey and Jenna*

Texan Kristyn Harris (also a NM chapter member) won the Academy of Western Artists' Will Rogers Medallion Western Swing Female Vocalist of the Year award just this August - and will be marrying-up in October. Woohoo, Woohoo! The

Eveready battery - uh, Jim Jones - has brought in several cohorts to perform his Western's Best series on Casa Vieja's outdoor patio; he submitted, with Doug Figgs and Mariam Funke (the Cowboy Way) video requested by Winfield's virtual (this year) Walnut Valley Festival, and is nearing the finish line on three (more) books including one for kids. Speaking of Eveready batteries, Syd Masters had a number of dinner-shows at Bobcat Pass Wilderness Adventures, Red River (I count 20 in just July and August). He managed to also squeeze in other appearances throughout the area. Peripatetic! Oregon poet (and NM chapter member) Tom Swearingen used the disappointing cancellation of live performances to publish a book, *Reflection*, of 46 of his most popular poems. That's not all to report, but our beloved editor keeps "tsk-tsking" over my shoulder.

**OKLAHOMA CHAPTER**  
**President: Donnie Poindexter**  
**cowboydp51@gmail.com**

Hope everyone is staying healthy and happy during these times. Ron Secoy reports "Looks like the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center in Duncan,

Oklahoma will put on a cowboy poetry gathering on Saturday, November 14. Indoors. 2-5 p.m. Please put out the word and have those interested in performing to contact me: rsecoy@wildblue.net, messenger 5806069574." Donnie Poindexter and his son Donnie A. attended the 24th Annual Will Rogers Awards presented by the Academy of Western Artists in Fort Worth, Texas, on August 13. His song, "Those Cowboys of Old", was a top-five nominee for Western Song of the Year.

Optimistic about getting back to playing future gigs, Slick, Oklahoma's A Little Farther West recently put into service a new tour bus. Susie and Robert Maxwell Case have dubbed the motor coach "Happy Trails," ready to roll to a venue near you.



*Susie Case and Happy Trails.*  
*Photo courtesy A Little Farther West*

*Continued on page 40*

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## BEHIND THE STUDIO DOOR

*Continued from page 30*

**Pros:** Easy to use, plug and play with most audio interfaces. Extensive loop and sound libraries included. Built in amp modeling and tuner, drummer app follows your rhythm and creates useful real sounding drum arrangements. Great software for demos.

**Cons:** Editing is complicated, confusing, and clunky. The software uses too much cpu, and bogs down with big arrangements.

**Logic X Pro** by Apple (approximately \$200.00): Logic X Pro is the big brother to Garage Band. The look is similar but what is under the hood is so much more. All the Pros of Garage Band and none of the Cons. The editing is good, and the software operation algorithms/code must be vastly different as Logic handles large sessions much easier than its little brother. The bundle comes with incredibly useful plugins as well that give you the ability to do professional recording, mixing, and mastering.

**Pros:** Software that can complete a project from beginning to end with lots of soft synths and amplifier modeling.

**Cons:** The editing can be confusing and clunky. Huge learning curve but lots of amazing support videos on YouTube®.

**Pro Tools 12** by Avid subscription price \$29.99 per month for the pro-production suite. Pro Tools has long been the choice of most professional studios. This software is very intuitive but requires a basic setup class to install properly. Pro Tools does so many tasks well, but its greatest appeal is the editing features which are second to none. I could go into more features but that would take more keystrokes than I have left. I feel Pro Tools is the best but it requires a considerable amount of study to work effectively.

**Pros:** Most studios use this platform, so it is easy to share sessions. The editing is very easy. Lots of great plugins included in the suite.

**Cons:** Expensive and complicated. You will need hours of training to be effective with the software.

I hope this information is helpful; any feedback is welcome. You may contact me at bryankuban@gmail.com.



# BUFFHAM'S BUFFOONERY

by Les Buffham



## THE HUNT AND THE FEAST

It was early winter on our ranch in northwest Colorado and hunting season was in full swing. A high school buddy of mine whose nickname was Smokey was spending the weekend with me, and we were recently armed with deer licenses and rifles. Were we excited?!

The morning greeted us with a foot of new snow on top of the three or four inches that was already on the ground. I'd heard some of the old timers say that new snow was the absolute best for the pursuance of the wily deer.

We left the house without any water or even a candy bar. We didn't need 'em. We were tuff! About noon we were getting a little tired, hungry and thirsty after slogging through that snow for about five hours and not even seeing a sign of a deer. We were approaching a big cedar tree from the north that was out in a sagebrush flat. There was a young buck deer laying in a bare spot on the south side of that tree sunning himself. The breeze must have been in our favor 'cuz he didn't see, hear or smell us 'til we were right close. When he finally got wind of us, he jumped up and I guess was trying to make up his mind which way to go when I laid him low with my trusty musket. Dumb deer. Dumb dead deer.

We bled him out and commenced to field dress him. By the time we got him cleaned out and draped over some bushes to air out we were sure 'nuff hungry and thirsty. We were scooping up hands full of snow to slake our thirst. I was looking at our prize buck stretched over them bushes when I got one of them better "Buffham" ideas.

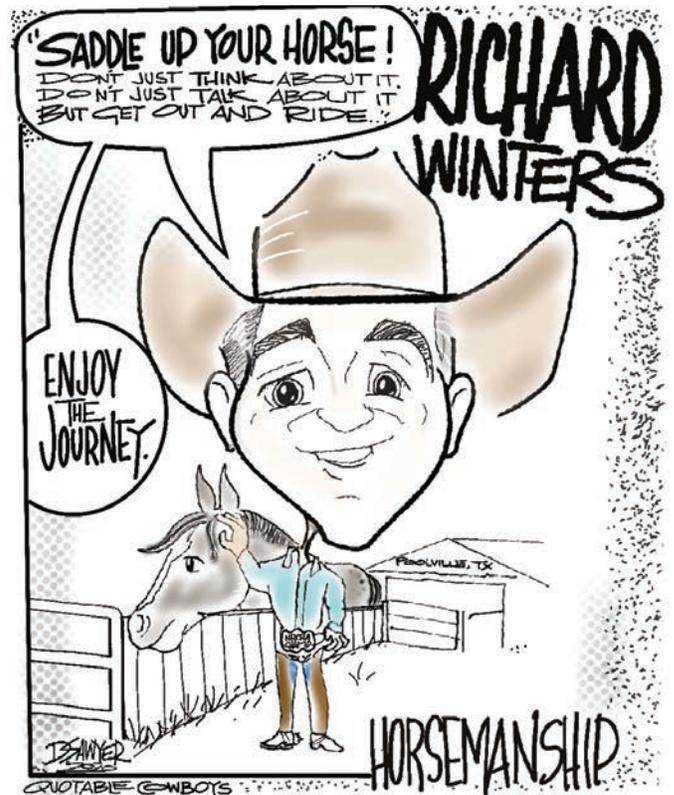
Smokey and I discussed the situation and agreed on a plan. We skinned out a hind quarter of that buck and cut us off a couple chunks of meat about roasting size. Then we set about building ourselves a cooking fire. The only fuel available that wasn't too wet to burn was some cow pies under the tree where that buck had been laying. We broke us off some dead twigs from the cedar tree, roughed up some bark from its trunk and, thankfully, Smokey had some matches in his emergency kit (a.k.a. coat pocket), so we got us a fire going. We busted off a couple green sticks from that cedar tree, skewered our two pieces of meat and held 'em over the fire. They were bubblin' and smellin' mighty good when Smokey looked across that fire at the deer and

hollered, "look-it there!" That haunch we cut the meat off of was still quiverin'!

We choked down some of that "fresh" meat and I'll tell you it wasn't too tasty. I can recommend a cow pie fire in a cook stove but it's not great for a barbecue. We must have got some good out of it 'cuz we made it back to the house without starvin' to death. Mom's sourdough biscuits and gravy sure hit the spot after our venison aperitif.

We had to head back to town the next morning so we would be ready to ride the bus the thirty miles from Maybell to Craig to school. Dad went out with a pack horse and brought what was left of our prize buck in. He had a good laff when he figured out from the signs what we had done.

Looking back maybe a little salt and pepper might have made all the difference. 🐾





# A MUSICAL NOTE AND REVIEWS FROM O.J. SIKES

**To submit your CD for review, send to:** O.J. Sikes, 681 Ellington Road, Ridgewood, NJ 07450  
**Required:** Album cost, S&H cost, Address, Phone Number | **Questions?** You can email O.J. at ojsikes@gmail.com



## THE MUSICAL COWBOY WHO DIDN'T SING

**M**otion picture star **Charles Starrett** didn't start out to be a movie cowboy, but after he made his first B-Western, *The Gallant Defender* (1935), there was no turning back. Starrett always found a place among the Top-10 most popular cowboy stars, until the genre ended with **Rex Allen's** *Phantom Stallion*, early in 1954.

Starrett made 115 B-Westerns, with over 100 of them featuring western and country music. The **Sons of the Pioneers** (with **Len Slye**) were featured prominently in the first film. They were such a hit, Columbia Pictures hired them as regulars in the Starrett series, where they remained until 1941, appearing in 29 more, even though Slye left in 1937 to star in his own series at Republic, as **Roy Rogers**. In the 1940s, Starrett's popularity increased even more as he assumed the role of *The Durango Kid*. The name was used as the title of the first film in a series featuring that character, and it was made while the Pioneers were still working with Starrett.

They were featured prominently in that film, as they had been in those that came before. In fact, while many appearances of musical acts or groups

were add-ons in western movies, the Pioneers were given prominent roles as part of the action. Ballads or lullabies were sung by the light of the moon or by a campfire on the prairie, while up-tempo tunes might be used to entertain audiences or dancers in town. And Starrett referred to the boys by name – their real names! This was not lost on movie-goers as the Pioneers' fan base grew with this exposure.

**Bob Nolan** & Starrett became friends, and Starrett truly enjoyed working with him. Their chemistry and Nolan's screen presence appealed to studio personnel. In one instance, an executive wanted to make Nolan a star, but Nolan wanted no part of that and disappeared from the set for a time, until the dust settled. Another executive had a very different view: he didn't like Nolan's voice, but he didn't want to lose the popular group. So, he hired singer **Donald Grayson** to sing Nolan's solos in Pioneers' songs! When audiences protested, Grayson left the movie business and found a job with **Spike Jones & his City Slickers**, changing his name to **Carl Grayson**, where he recorded a couple of very nice western ballads!

The Sons of the Pioneers were an important part of each Starrett film rather than add-ons. Were it not for him and his films, they might have become just another musical act. And if they hadn't been perceived as a notch above the rest, the genre might not have survived. The Pioneers were at the center of the revival of western music that began in the 1970s.

Without the Sons of the Pioneers and their history, we probably wouldn't be discussing western music today, i.e. the IWMA itself began as a group of musicians and fans organized around the Pioneers, their music and history. And if it hadn't been for Starrett, the Pioneers wouldn't have gained the vital national exposure they needed at the time, helping promote their radio appearances and record sales. It's hard to over-estimate the importance of Starrett's films in establishing the Sons of the Pioneers in B-Westerns and, in so doing, following Gene Autry's lead in expanding the role of western music itself in the Western film genre.

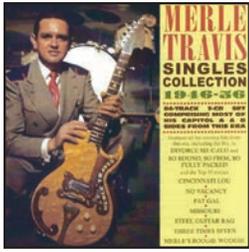


After the Pioneers joined Roy Rogers in 1941, Starrett continued to invite western artists (including **Wesley Tuttle, Bob Wills, Pee Wee King & his Golden West Cowboys, The Cass County Boys, The Jimmy Wakely Trio, Carolina Cotton**, etc.) to make guest appearances in his films, providing a welcome opportunity for these artists to gain more publicity. So, without singing or playing a note, Charles Starrett made a major contribution to the Western Music genre.

## THE MERLE TRAVIS SINGLES COLLECTION (3 CD SET)

Merle Travis

ACROBAT ACTRCD 9096



Merle Travis "did it all." He developed a guitar picking style that was named for him, composed more hit songs

than you can shake a stick at, and he had an appealing singing voice that, together with his Kentucky accent, "sealed the deal" to make his records so popular. This three-CD set contains most of his "singles" on the Capitol label (both A & B sides), recorded from the time he started recording as a solo artist in 1946, until 1956. Actually, there are two tracks from an earlier session with his good friend Wesley Tuttle, but they were released later, so are included here.

Travis wrote songs that became hits for others, like "Smoke, Smoke, Smoke (that Cigarette)" (for Tex Williams) and "16 Tons" (for Ernie Ford) that are not here, but there are a few sides that feature well-known artists like Eddie Kirk, Tennessee Ernie Ford and The

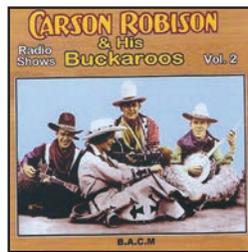
Whippoorwills joining Merle. And the list of sidemen reads like a Who's Who of Western and Western swing musicians, e.g. Billy Liebert, Dale Warren, Joaquin Murphey, Noel Boggs, Phil Marx, Cliffie Stone, Speedy West, Tex Atchison and the list goes on.

My only disappointment was that a couple of the Western sides he recorded with Wesley Tuttle in 1946 were omitted. But most everything else (84 tracks) is here, including his biggest hits. Widely available online or from your favorite sources.



## RADIO SHOWS VOL. 2

Carson Robinson & His Buckaroos  
BACMCD D659



When Carson Jay Robison heard folks sing the traditional cowboy ballad, "O Bury Me Not on the

Lone Prairie," with roots going back to a sea shanty, he had an uncomfortable feeling about it. He asked himself why a cowboy, who loved the prairie,

wouldn't want to be buried there. It didn't make sense. So, he sat down and wrote a song he felt was more appropriate to the cowboy's point of view: "Carry Me Back to the Lone Prairie." He was to write many more songs, but this one became a classic.

In the 1920s, he teamed with Vernon Dalhart, writing and performing/recording songs about current events, among other things, and then formed a successful partnership with Frank Luther, writing and recording novelty songs and western songs as well. By 1931, he was ready to launch his own group, his Buckaroos, performing novelty and popular/folk songs but emphasizing Western material, and they dressed Western to underscore that point.

Carson Robison & his Buckaroos travelled to England where they found a very receptive audience, and they spent a great deal of time there, performing "in person" and on-the-air. Radio was an important vehicle for their music on both sides of the Atlantic. Fortunately for us, the BACM label has located a number of recordings of those very entertaining shows and you'll hear five on them on this CD. Available on the British Archive of Country Music website. 🐾

## RANGER DOUG'S CLASSIC COWBOY CORRAL IS ON THE AIR!

The best in classic western music... Roy, Gene, Tex, Sons of the Pioneers and beyond...curated from the vast personal collection of Ranger Doug. Sidekick Side Meat, "Voice of the Ignorant," provides humorous interruptions and misses the point week after week. Listen for yourself and find out why folks are saying: "Such a great show! Timeless, interesting music and wacky comedic chemistry between the Ranger and Mr. Meat make this 'appointment listening' around our bunkhouse."

Join the fun on SiriusXM  
Willie's Roadhouse, Channel 59  
Friday 11PM-midnight, Saturday 8-9PM,  
Sunday 9-10AM. (All times EDT)





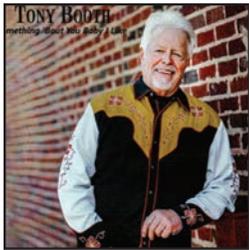
★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**RICK HUFF'S**  
**BEST OF THE WEST REVIEWS**

To submit items for review, send to: Rick Huff, P.O. Box 8442, Albuquerque, NM 87198-8442. Include: Album cost, S&H cost, Address, Phone Number. We also recommend you furnish a land source (Address or PO Box) as well as Online sources for obtaining product. Submitting a CD or Book for review does not guarantee that it will be reviewed or that a review will be published. Finalized CD or book cover art must accompany the work and be unsigned.

## TONY BOOTH

### *Something 'Bout You Baby I Like*



These Nashville and Bakersfield tracks dating from the early to mid-70s lay with others in repose in the

back of the Buck Owens Studio vaults. Happily for the fans, Jim Shaw from Owens Enterprises saw fit to offer Tracy Pitcox of Heart Of Texas the chance to resuscitate (remaster and digitally clean up) the languishing recordings. The result is a beautiful showcase of a generally under-appreciated artist.

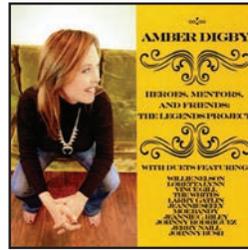
Tony Booth won a number of ACM Awards in the early 1970s and achieved decent chart success in the US and Canada. Many of these songs were unreleased until now, including four Tony Booth duets with his brother Larry, all four being worthy covers of Everly Brothers hits. Most of the tracks aren't songs the fans will remember first, but isn't that the point? Undiscovered gems? Some of them here include the uncredited "Arms Of A Tennessee Woman," "Fading Taillights" and "All Night Long," Michael Kosser's "Bet My Soul," Richard Supe's title track "Something 'Bout You Baby I Like" and Lonnie Mack's "Watch Out For Lucy."

If you are among the many folks who would like to swing into some Honkytonk... with this release Heart Of Texas has a "Booth" waiting for you! Twenty-one tracks.

CD: Available through [heartoftexascountry.com](http://heartoftexascountry.com) or call 325-597-1895.

## AMBER DIGBY & FRIENDS

### *The Legends Project*



An impressive roster of artists joins the impressive Amber Digby in this tribute collection.

As is sometimes the case in such affairs, the blends of voices vary occasionally depending, very honestly, on the age-driven vocal disintegration of the classic artists involved. But these duet and guest appearance CDs are still interesting, and they manage to serve as benchmarks in time. And among the selections offered here, there are certainly those that rise above.

Particularly nice (and therefore "pick") tracks include the Amber Digby/Jeanie C. Riley duet "The Heart He Kicks Around," Loretta Lynn's outing with Amber "It Wasn't God Who Made Honkytonk Angels," the Jerry Niall teaming with her "Texas Dance Hall Girl" and Moe Bandy's track with Amber "Soft Lights and Hard Country."

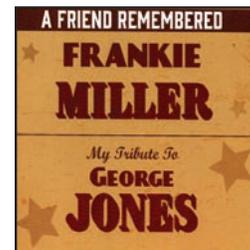
Of course, it's all aimed at the boot scooters among us...and scoot, they will. And should. Recommended for them, eleven tracks.

CD: Available through [heartoftexascountry.com](http://heartoftexascountry.com) or call 325-597-1895.

## FRANKIE MILLER

### *A Friend Remembered:*

### *My Tribute To George Jones*



In his producer's note, Heart Of Texas Records founder Tracy Pitcox writes, "This album has been

a labor of love for 'The Blackland Farmer' and I believe George (Jones) is looking down with great approval." I see no reason to question that sentiment. After a staggering seventy-year performing career, Frankie Miller remains possessed of a strong Country vocal instrument. He uses it to great advantage on these tracks.

At the time George Jones hit with "White Lightning" (a nice cover of which is offered here), Frankie Miller was taking one of two rides up the charts he would have with "Blackland Farmer." This was a time of touring and fun, represented in this release by a cute little piece called "When George Had A Flat Top" (that's a haircut, young folks)! Pick covers include "I'm Ragged But I'm Right," the career-making song for writer Hal Bynum "The Old, Old House" (which Miller personally took to Jones), "Open Pit Mine," "Why Baby Why" and more. Top players employed on the project finish the effect with a cherry on top.

Fourteen tracks, highly recommended for Swing dancers and the nostalgic.

CD: Available through [heartoftexasrecords.com](http://heartoftexasrecords.com) or phone 325-597-1895

## TERESA KAY ORR

### *Ladies & Outlaws*



For her inspiration, songwriter/singer Teresa Kay Orr draws from period history and people who

could easily have lived in it.

With fellow Nebraskan Marci Broyhill, Orr has developed two Humanities Council-funded programs entitled "Deperados Of Nebraska" and "Aprons, Skirts, Hats & Flirts." By its very title you can tell this CD fits right in as a soundtrack. Two of the album's songs "He's Not Coming Back For Me" and "Long, Long, Long Way To Go" are connected with Nebraska's homegrown badman Doc Middleton. The James Gang's famous raid on Northfield (Minnesota) is represented in "Trouble's Comin'."

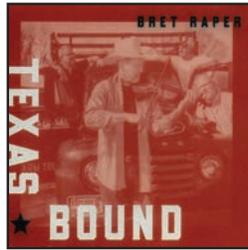
I should admit to being partial to the use of modulations in arrangements and also being slow to accept synthesized accompaniments in Western Music. Both elements are employed here. Picks include "The Apron" (a nice song of familial endowment), the aforementioned "Long, Long, Long Way To Go," "Out Here In The West," "The One For Me," a novelty song "The Chaperon" and (although not specifically Western) "Chasing My Heart Back Home."

A certain plaintive tone in Orr's voice does easily lend itself to the more homespun of her songs, but it's a voice that can report on outlaw doings as well. Okay, I'll recommend it! Twelve tracks.

CD: Available through [teresakayentertainment.com](http://teresakayentertainment.com) or email [singNsmile@yahoo.com](mailto:singNsmile@yahoo.com)

## BRET RAPER

### *Texas Bound*



Maybe one particular term has become trite, but in this case it's trite and true!! Bret

Raper is "unique." He performs and issues full production Western Swing albums that he neither markets nor sells! The CD bears no bar code, and right there on his album jacket, he says "this CD is my gift to you." He writes that, in his opinion, he and his wife make good enough livings and music is his hobby. It wasn't always so. He spent a good number of years backing Tom T. Hall on the road. But when Western Swing courses through your veins, it's gotta come out somehow!

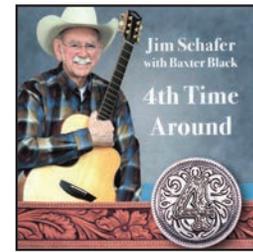
These days Bret Raper is a court trial judge! Times have changed. In the Old West when a judge said "you'll swing," it meant somethin' else! A plethora of Bret's friends who happen to be amazing swing musicians and vocalists up the quality quotient to a high tier. Any of these tracks could shine as "picks" on other releases, but particularly fine examples are "Texas Swing" (with Sheila Stephen), "Deep Water" (with Gordon Lowry) and "Play Me A Shuffle Song" (with Cindy Richardson). Instrumentals "Cajun Medley," "Jersey Bounce" and "Spanish Eyes" shine brightly as well.

Due to there being no track timings publishing or composer credits (with a single exception), in this current pressing Raper's superlative release will not be considered for IWMA Swing CD Of The Year. A shame, because it could easily win! Rules are rules. Fourteen tracks, highly recommended.

CD: Info through [brt.raper@gmail.com](mailto:brt.raper@gmail.com)

## JIM SCHAFFER (WITH BAXTER BLACK)

### *4th Time Around*



Here Dr. Jim and the illustrious Mr. Black go about showing "fourth time's the charm."

Not that the third, second and first weren't charmers themselves! Once again these one-time band mates and their friends showcase more predominantly Honkytonk songs from Baxter's self-described "notebook of livin' room hits!"

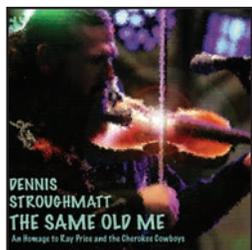
One of the Western stars from their 4th firmament is a piece called "Out Where The Cowboys Rope And Ride," a song that's ripe for covering by others...particularly harmony specialists, I would say. For the rockier Cowboy singers, "Rodeo Las Vegas" is primed for loading. Curiously one song "Wine Over Matter" is presented twice. The first time out it's "straight." On the final track it's replete with a wino's voice over (or Wine-Over?). Maybe pretty much the way you might expect to have it interpreted as you hear it from a honkytonk jukebox! Another Western track proclaims "I Want To Go Where There Ain't No Telephone Poles." I suppose that would have to be a cell phone store.

"4th Time Around" provides a diverting showcase for more of Baxter's material. Twelve tracks, recommended.

CD: Available through Coyote Cowboy Company, PO Box 2190, Benson, AZ 85602 or phone 520-586-1077

## DENNIS STROUGHMATT

### *The Same Old Me* (A homage to Ray Price & The Cherokee Cowboys)



Solid swing is the reward for the Classic Country treasure hunter is Dennis Stroughmatt's mix of

new recordings (with participating members of the Cherokee Cowboys) and other tracks dating from 2013 to 2016. On four songs guest vocalists Tony Booth, Mel Tillis, Jr., Darrell McCall and Leona Williams contribute as well.

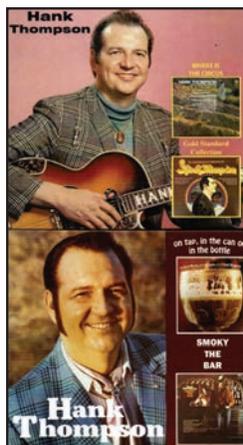
Stroughmatt is known principally as a French/Creole-style fiddler and vocalist from middle America. His tenor vocals are strong, and his band L'Esprit Creole is well known regionally for that sound, but this release is an example of their more straightforward Western Swing and Honkytonk styles performed by masters of their respective instruments. Among the players are Hargus "Pig" Robbins (piano), Buddy Spicher and "Little Red Hayes (fiddles). Particularly nice tracks include swingers "The Same Old Me," "City Lights," "Home In San Antone/San Antonio Rose," "Rubber Dolly," "Bubbles In My Beer," "I'll Be There" and slow dancers "Night Life," "(Please) Release Me," "Healing Hands Of Time" and "Lonely Street."

A note: Despite all the times a particular feature has been heralded on albums, this time I can truly report there is a bonus or hidden track on this release! For reasons best known to them, a nice instrumental take of "Maiden's Prayer" is the unlisted twenty-third tune. 23 tracks, recommended.

CD: Available through honkytonkfiddle.com and heartoftexascountry.com or phone 325-597-1895

## HANK THOMPSON

### *Where Is the Circus & Gold Standard Collection;* *On Tap, In The Can Or In The Bottle & Smokey The Bar*



Judging from the frequent appearance in recent months of classic Swing tracks and dance tempos behind everything from soup ads to travel logs, the re-arrival of timeless

Hank Thompson albums may prove timely as well!

Here from Heart Of Texas and underwriters Ray & Ann Thompson Womack come two Thompson CDs bearing four original vinyl albums from the late Honkytonk master. Dating from 1966 and 1969, these represent him particularly well.

For fans who are looking to choose between them but want "Where Is The Circus" and "Big One Got Away," I'll let you know those songs appear on both CDs. The "Gold Standard Collection" features Thompson takes on hits of others such as "Six Days On The Road," "Slippin' Around," "Together Again," "Cold, Cold Heart" and "Walking The Floor Over You." Another point of historic interest is the presence of Merle Travis as a session player on his own "Sixteen Tons" and "Smoke Smoke Smoke That Cigarette!" Additional famous names on hand include Glen Campbell, Curtis Potter, Harold Hensley, Johnny Gimble, Hargus "Pig" Robbins and Jimmy Bryant among others.

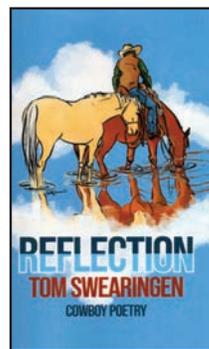
Hank Thompson is a perfect example of what I call a "printable" voice. Once you know his sound, you will always know if a song you're hearing is one of his. It stands in stark contrast to today's Hot Country music mill that essentially grooms soundalikes to be discarded when their sexy quotient diminishes. Happy for the

genre, some folks like Heart Of Texas founder Tracy Pitcox are out there working to fan the original flame of Country. Twenty-four tracks on each CD, highly recommended.

CDs: Available through heartoftexascountry.com at 325-597-1895 or hankthompson.com

## TOM SWEARINGEN

### *Reflection* (Book) ISBN 978-0-578-68380-5



Acknowledging the fact that there is a repetition of certain key themes in collections of cowboy verse, I try to remember each presentation might be the only one a person might ever encounter, then

review accordingly. With that in mind, how clearly and honestly does Oregon's Tom Swearingen traverse familiar ground? Very.

Present in his new book (a direct result of his pandemic sequestering) are tributes to his state and state of mind ("Oregon is a sacred ground where coiled up thoughts can be unwound"), the lure of the life, poems about famous events and the people who "populate" them. Drawings from Oregon artist Elizabeth Zimmerman populate the book as well. Swearingen's crowd-pleasing "Ropin' Mama's Llama" is here as is a personal favorite of mine (the enigmatic "In The Shadow Of The Tree Line").

Other picks would be "Rode Away Alone," a bit of calf discipline dispensed in "Oh No You Don't," "A Love Story You Can Take To The Bank," "Cowgirl From Nantucket" (thankfully NOT a limerick!), the epic "Winter Pleasure Ride," "Well Howdy Little Feller," "Dogies In Our Band" and "The Visit."

One hundred six pages, recommended.

Book: (\$20 + \$3 s/h through oregoncowboypoet.com)

# CLASSIC REVIEWS

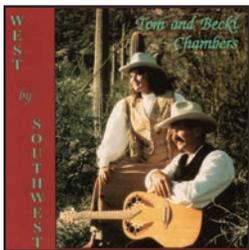
## SOUNDS FROM THE PAST

*(Recordings From Our Great Western Treasury That Deserve a New Spin)*

BY RICK HUFF

During part of my time spent tucked away during the big Covid 19 retreat, I decided to revisit some recordings from our Western Music past. Doing so not only made me put renewed focus on them, it also made me want to reveal some of my freshened findings with you. It was so tough to randomly pick just a couple to share here from such a high calibre inventory. Just know that there are many, many others I might have chosen, and I might do so in the future! No, these are not recordings from Hall Of Famers. I suppose you could say they come from among our "Rank & File." Only they "rank" high on the quality chart and shouldn't just be "filed" away!

### TOM & BECKI CHAMBERS *West By Southwest* (1991)



One of the earliest partnerships to grace the stages of the newly formed Western Music Association

was that of Tom & Becki Chambers. With a full decade of performance experience behind them by 1989, The Chambers could be found entertaining each Thursday evening at Tucson's popular Hacienda del Sol Guest Ranch where, by kerosene lantern light, diners feasted on both fine chuckwagon fare and far better than "fair" Western entertainment thanks to the pair's heartfelt cowboy songs, old and new.

On this release The Chambers' appreciative fans received strong original songs, very well performed, such as "New Day Dawning On The Prairie," "Land Of Gentle Color," "Thunder Across The Desert," "Trail Of Tomorrow" and "Wolf Of Winter." The Chambers' lead and harmony vocals and Tom's guitar are enhanced by two additional harmony vocalists and six musicians with instrumentation

ranging from the standard acoustic varieties plus vihuela and gitarron, along with sensitively applied synthesizer... pretty radical thinking that early on! It seems to most often be the cassette version of the album that shows up from aftermarket sources, but it was eventually converted to the "new" medium of compact disc.

Some years ago, Tom Chambers provided a good oral history of the WMA's founding and earliest years and, as of this writing, he still serves on the organization's Board of Advisers.



### MONTANA BLUE & THE BIG SKY COWBOYS *Self-titled* (1993)



Among those who knew them, reviewed them or played them on Western friendly radio

shows, there is a certain mystique surrounding this group. These days you still hear quite a bit of "whatever

happened to them" and "have you heard anything recently about them?" That fervor is generated because they were remarkably different, astonishingly good and, for all intents and purposes, they vanished without a trace!

Although acoustic, MB & The BSCs featured tight, showy, progressive pop/jazz harmonies that were unknown in the Western music genre. The family band was made up of dad Bob "Montana Blue" Meyer and sons Kevin, Brian and Dan, the arranger/producer and co-writer (with Tom Spaulding) of their album's fine originals "Big Sky," "End Of The Line," "Ride 'Em Cowboy" and "Moon O'er Montana." Also featured were some of the finest versions ever recorded of classics like "Along The Navajo Trail," "Ragtime Cowboy Joe," "Don't Fence Me In," "Colorado Trail" and others. In researching this, it turns out there exists a YouTube® posting by Tom Spaulding of "Riding Down The Canyon" from then as featured on an episode of "The Riders Radio Theater"... a song not included on the one known album of theirs. The discovery sent O.J. Sikes and me into a treasure hunter frenzy! If anybody knows of additional recordings done by the group, O.J. and I are all ears!

# Chapter Update

*Continued from page 32*

## TEXAS CHAPTER

**President: Cary Wiseman**  
**Wisemanranch71@gmail.com**

Hello from the Texas Chapter!

We hope everyone is doing well as we can be. We are still having to stay 6 feet apart whenever that works, and I am still not getting used to these face masks even after several months! We have started our performances back at the Fort Worth Stockyards again, the crowds are getting a little better. We are seeing the folks come back to the Stockyards and the stores and restaurants are doing better. We would like to congratulate Ms. Abby Payne. She is a college student now and is starting the next phase of her life. We hope Abby is as successful in her continuing education as she is with her music. We are confident she will find success at whatever task on which she to embarks. The chapter is considering a virtual event and trying to set some available dates that work for everyone. This will be our first attempt at a virtual performance. With success, we will learn how to do these events for the future. We may be doing more virtual events as long as the Covid-19 virus is around. The chapter continues to promote our western culture and preserve our way of life, our music and poetry! God Bless, please continue prayers for our country and everyone's health, Happy Trails!

## UTAH CHAPTER

**President: Brian Arnold**  
**saddlestrings@live.com**

The Utah Chapter members have been doing their level best to weather the entertainment drought. Chris Mortensen has been faithfully posting videos on Facebook (almost daily), and others have been doing small gigs. Sam Deleeuw is recovering from back surgery and can't wait to get back on the stage. Colt Blankman, Brian Arnold, and other cowboy performers

spent a week on a wagon train from near Bryce Canyon to Kanab, entertaining in camp each night after supper. Brian's wife, Teri, isn't riding her horses much yet but has recovered enough to ride in a wagon the entire trip. This one should be on everyone's bucket list - Kanab Western Legends.

## WESTERN WORDSMITHS CHAPTER

**President: Mark Munzert**  
**markmunzert@gmail.com**

HAYWIRE, a part of all of our lives at the time being. Or, 2020, the year that wasn't. Negatives be gone!

The Kansas Cowboy Poetry Competition, virtual or not, was a great success and Ron Wilson did a great job of bringing it all together. Participating in the contest were Western Wordsmiths: Betty Burlingham; Sherl Cedarburg; P.W. Conway (2nd place serious & humorous); Smokey Culver; Dennis Flynn (1st place-serious); Joe Herrington; K.C. Lacourse; Geoff Mackay; George Ray Russell (1st place-humorous); Bob Sampson; and Scott Wiswell (3rd place-humorous). Pardon the error in Spring's issue as we incorrectly identified Scott Wiswell as the writer of The For Sale Sign poem which appeared in Ranch magazine. Correctly, the author is Sweet Home Oregon's Jim Crotts who "dug that one out of the depths of my soul as a tribute to folks who we all know and care about deeply". Seems most of our Chapter is back to work, though many never missed a minute, and those that have had the extra time away from toil put it to use in other creative undertakings.

## WYOMING CHAPTER

**President: John Sidle**  
**johnsidle@gmail.com**

This summer, traditionally a season of festivals and parties, has been hit hard by the virus here in Wyoming. We feel fortunate to play the few gigs we still have. John Sidle has seen local dude ranches severely limit

their campfire music but still plays some one-off sessions. He has been working on set lists and practice, practice, practice! Miss V – the Gypsy Cowbelle has been spending time working on her home.

In July, after many months off due to the pandemic, Wildflowers members Kimberly Kaye, Pegie Douglas, and Sherl Cederburg have played outdoor concerts in Belle Fourche and Hot Springs, SD. Brad and Bonnie Exton, the Ramblin' Rangers, like everyone else have had many of their 2020 performances cancelled, but have managed to perform at a few outdoor, socially distant concerts. Their latest CD, "One More River to Cross" was released early this summer and, considering the limited exposure, has been well received by those folks that have heard or purchased it. In the meantime, they are starting work on a new EP that will celebrate the poetry of their good friend, the late Doug Keller of Kanab, UT who was instrumental in getting them into cowboy poetry and music some 14 years ago. The EP, due out in 2021, will include six or seven self-penned tunes adapted from some of Doug's poems. Jerry Bell has finished recording his eighth CD entitled "Cowboy TV." Keep a lookout; it due out soon.

Paul Larson has been "keepin' it Cowboy" with a busy summer playing chuckwagon shows at the Palmer Gulch Resort in Hill City, SD.

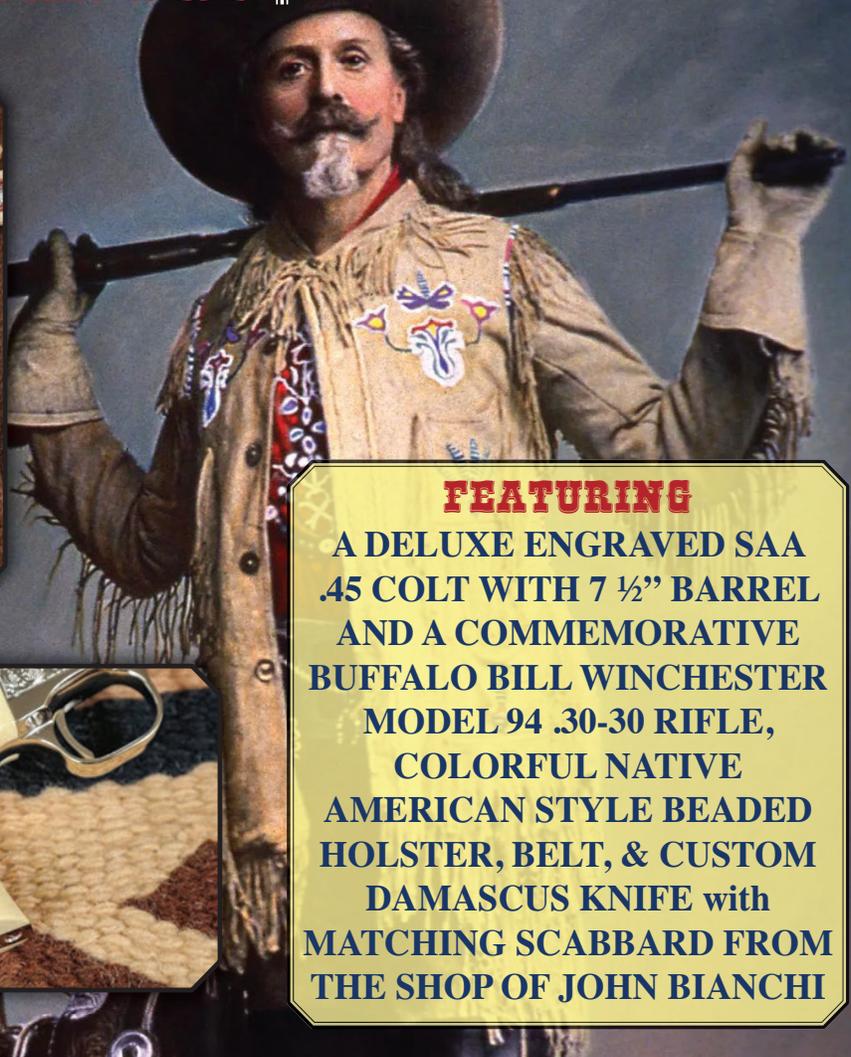
Karen Killion is busy building new fence for her horses and will attend Merwin Nilson's Chugwater Acoustic Jam to party and corral new members for IWMA. Brian Arnold of Saddle Strings had a great time playing the Bear Lake Raspberry Days with a thrown together band consisting of him and Laurie Morgan joined by Chris Mortensen on bass, Idaho fiddler Jamie Bartschi and guitarist Daron Little of Saratoga.

Our far-flung chapter member Kerry Grombacher will soon be back

*Continued on page 47*

# SILVER SCREEN LEGEND XXIII

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# Reed's Reading

## Recommendations & Book Reviews



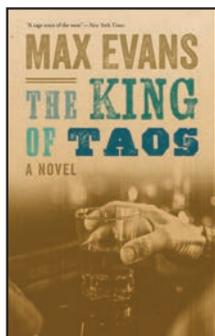
Ollie Reed, Jr.

To have your book reviewed by Ollie, send a copy to: Ollie Reed, Jr., P.O. Box 2381, Corrales, N.M. 87048 or contact him at: [olreed.com@gmail.com](mailto:olreed.com@gmail.com)

New Mexico author Max Evans died in Albuquerque (see In Memoriam, Page 18) as I was preparing this issue's column. Max was my friend for more than 40 years and the most picturesque person anyone who knew him had ever met. He was the flat-out best storyteller I have ever known. His last novel, "The King of Taos," was published this year by the University of New Mexico Press. In this column, I review that book and Max's first novel, "The Rounders." Both are available through UNM Press and other outlets.

### MAX EVANS

#### "The King of Taos"



Max Evans did not always write about cowboys. He wrote about war, impossible dreams, mystical experiences and the expansive array of characters he

encountered in his varied life.

This novel, set in Taos, N.M., in the late 1950s, is about winos, artists, losers, lovers, ladies of the night, the people who have to live with and endure them and still others who move in and out of their wobbling orbit.

It was published just a few months ago, but Max started writing it in the 1950s when he was a cowboy turned artist turned author living in Taos. He knew the people who became characters in the novel, and, for the sake of research, hung out in a wino bar with them.

Max worked on the novel in the '50s and '60s, then set it aside as other

projects took over and took off. He'd lose the manuscript every now and again, but it kept resurfacing and he went back at it and finished it within the last couple of years.

It's more like a series of episodes and personality sketches than an evolving novel, and it seems to me on occasion to move back and forth in time.

"Time has a very strong mind. It can fly in a wink, backward as fast as forward, up, down, sideways, at any speed, or become motionless; accelerate so fast it is invisible even to itself. Everything is controlled by time ... even time itself." That's the novel's Zacharias Chacon talking. Chacon is a World War II veteran intelligent enough to launch himself into flights of poetic fancy, but so hapless he passes his days waiting for a war-injury compensation check from the Veterans Administration and scrounging up enough money to buy a bottle or bottles of cheap wine -- even if the latter means taking money his young son earned shining shoes on Taos Plaza.

Chacon is the chief wino, the king of Taos. Another major player in the story is Shaw Spencer, a young man who has moved from Kansas to Taos to make his name and fortune as a painter. It is not difficult to imagine that Max, who at one time was a painter, put some of his young self into Spencer.

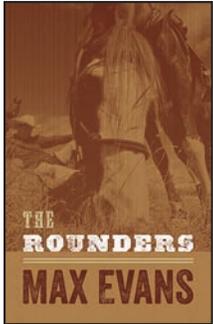
Still another important character, one that provokes Max's best writing, is Taos and the wild, beautiful terrain that surrounds it.

"He parked and listened and felt. A great silence surrounded him. He felt the stillness as a speck, the vastness as a home, and the loneliness as a blessing. Suddenly the desert moved before his eyes and bulged up into the mountains, and the mountains sank into the desert like a ship into the sea. Then they returned like a newborn island. The sky flapped its wings and smiled."

"The King of Taos," as sad as it is funny, captures a vibrant time in the author's development as a writer. It was a time Max could not forget or escape, a time he had to get into print before he moved on.

**“The King of Taos,”**  
**9780826361646; hardback, \$24.95;**  
**University of New Mexico Press;**  
**available through unmpress.com,**  
**bookstores, Amazon, Barnes &**  
**Noble and Target)**

**MAX EVANS**  
*“The Rounders”*



This is Max’s third book, following a collection of stories and a biography, but his first novel. And because it got turned into a 1965 movie,

it can be credited with kicking Max’s writing career into a high gallop.

I discovered “The Rounders” novel when I was a college student in Mississippi more than 50 years ago, 10 years before I settled in New Mexico and met the author.

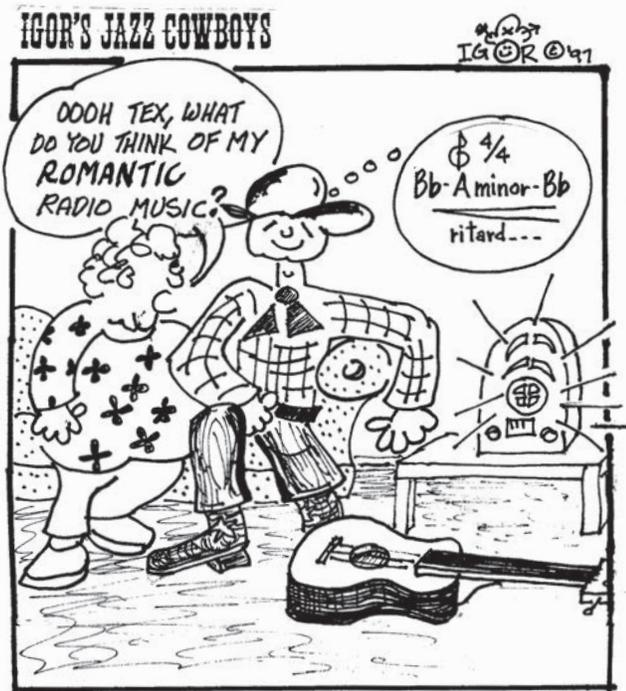
All these years later, the comic adventures of Dusty Jones and Wrangler Lewis, a couple of worn-out, stomped-on mid-20th Century New Mexico cowboys, and Old Fooler, a loco, unpredictable, fierce-bucking roan horse, remain my favorite work by Max.

Bad things happen. Old Fooler bites a chunk out of Dusty’s back, tries to drown him and gets him into wrecks. But as rough as all that sounds, there’s never a disconsolate sentence in the book. It’s a fun ride from first word to last and a lot of it at ears-laid-back speed. “Hell, all I had to do was lean over on Old Fooler and he went past that stallion so fast I could smell the hair scorch.”

When it comes to cowboy novels, I prefer those drawn from actual cowboy life to those with last-chapter shootouts in the Bitterbrew Saloon.

“The Rounders” comes right out of Max’s own experiences as a cowboy, mostly in New Mexico. It’s got hard riding, hard drinking, bad broncs, barroom brawls, bedroll romancing, a Fourth of July rodeo, salty characters and inconsiderate cattle. It’s got Max at his unbridled best, and it doesn’t get better than that.

**“The Rounders,” 9780862349132;**  
**paperback, \$19.95; University of**  
**New Mexico Press; available through**  
**unmpress.com, bookstores, Amazon,**  
**Barnes & Noble and Target) ✨**



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Clyde Lucas	Sylmar, CA	Renee Wood	Ogden, UT
Mike Mahaney	Burbank, CA	Joyce Woodson	San Juan Capistrano, CA

# Western Charts

## TOP 30 COWBOY / WESTERN ALBUMS

1. A Place to Land – Kristyn Harris
2. Good Dog – Dave Stamey
3. The Hidden Trail – Abby Payne
4. One More River to Cross – The Ramblin' Rangers
5. Little Bit of Texas – Carlos Washington
6. Cowboy Boots – Mike Craig
7. Turn 'em Loose – Susie Knight
8. Rhythm Rides Again – The Hanson Family
9. Frontier – Mary Kaye
10. Go West – The Cowboy Way
11. Plains, Trains, and Also Bob Wills – Miss Devon & the Outlaw
12. Keepin' On – Ed Wahl
13. Those Cowboys of Old – Donnie Poindexter
14. America's Last Singing Cowboy – Rex Allen
15. Favorites – Jim Jones
16. Soul of the West – Clint Bradley
17. Ghost Town Holdout – Joe Lima
18. New Songs of the West – Jim Schafer
19. California Skies – Don Burnham
20. No Place Left to Go – Ron Christopher
21. Wild West Texas Wind – Carolyn Martin
22. Hats Off to the Cowboy – Red Steagall
23. The Old West Trio – Hoofin' It
24. Saddlin' Up for God and Country – Dawn Anita
25. Beautiful Texas – Judy James
26. Ridin', Ropin', and Rounders – Rusted Spurs West
27. Swing Set – LeeLee Robert
28. The Outside Circle – Mike Blakely
29. Ladies & Outlaws – Teresa Kay Orr
30. Blues on the Trail – Gary Allegretto

## TOP 10 WESTERN SWING ALBUMS

1. A Place to Land – Kristyn Harris
2. Plains, Trains, and Also Bob Wills – Miss Devon & the Outlaw
3. Rhythm Rides Again – The Hanson Family
4. Little Bit of Texas – Carlos Washington
5. Bye, Bye Blues – Susie Blue & the Lonesome Fellas
6. California Skies – Don Burnham
7. Wild West Texas Wind – Carolyn Martin
8. Swing Set – LeeLee Robert
9. Rockets, Romance, and the Rhythm of the Road – Cornell Hurd Band
10. Texas Bound – Bret Raper

## 10 MOST PLAYED SONGS BY WESTERN MUSIC DJS

1. Good Dog – Dave Stamey
2. Cows Around – Kristyn Harris
3. Jingle Bob Music – Abby Payne
4. Place to Land – Kristyn Harris
5. Frontier – Mary Kaye
6. Musician Standard Time – Kristyn Harris
7. You Don't Know Me – Hailey Sandoz
8. Old Range Cowboy – Rodeo & Juliet
9. Soul of the West – Clint Bradley  
Old Soul – Kristyn Harris  
Turn 'Em Loose – Susie Knight  
Hats Off to the Cowboy – Red Steagall

## 10 MOST PLAYED POETRY ALBUMS

1. The Truth – A.K. Moss
2. Language of the Land – Tom Swearingen
3. Born to Ponder – Sherl Cederburg
4. Masters, Vol. 3 – Various Artists
5. They Come Prancin' – A.K. Moss
6. Masters – Various Artists
7. Day Workin' – Mark Munzert  
New Mexico Stray – Dennis Russell  
Masters, Vol. 2 – Various Artists
10. West Texas Heat – Teresa Burleson  
Snow on the Sage – Marleen Bussma  
Elko: A Cowboy Gathering – Various Artists

**\*A missing number in the list represents a tie for that spot.**

**Attention DJs!** Your contributions to *The Western Way* charts are welcomed. Please send your playlist, including the song and the CD on which it appears, to [meoteo@aol.com](mailto:meoteo@aol.com).

Various DJ friends have reported their playlists for the last quarter, thus helping us compile these charts reflecting which CDs are being played the most on their radio shows. You will find a listing of those reporting DJs on the following page.

# Western Playlists - Reporters

Here are the DJs who submitted their playlists this quarter:

**Joe Angel**

KEOS  
PO Box 1085  
Del Valle, TX 78617  
jangel dj@arhaven.com

**Waynetta Ausmus**

PO Box 294  
Tom Bean, TX 75489  
waynettawwr@yahoo.com  
www.WaynettaAusmus.com

**Michael Babiarz**

KVMR Community Radio 89.5FM  
120 Bridge Street  
Nevada City, Ca 95959  
530-265-9073  
916-233-6203  
www.kvmr.org  
back40radio@kvmr.org

**Bobbi Jean Bell**

*"OutWest Hour"*  
KUPR, www.kupr.org  
Out West, 8201 Golf Course Rd NW  
Ste D3, #189  
Albuquerque, NM 87120  
*"Campfire Cafe" & "Saddle Up, America"*  
Equestrian Legacy Radio Network  
Co-host with Gary Holt  
bobbijeanbell@gmail.com  
www.equestrianlegacy.net  
661-714-0045

**Skip Bessonette & His Pard Lucky**

*"Rogue Valley Bound Show"*  
2395 E. McAndrews Rd.  
Medford, Oregon 97504  
541-301-7649  
www.earsradio.com  
skipbessonette@gmail.com

**Janice Brooks**

*"Bus of Real Country"*  
170 Jodon Ave.  
Pleasant Gap, PA 16823  
Busgaljb@gmail.com

**Peter Bruce**

*"Under Western Skies"*  
KAFF Country Legends FM 93.5/AM 930  
1117 W. Route 66  
Flagstaff, AZ 86001  
928-556-2650  
www.kafflegends.com  
peter.bruce@kaff.com

**Chuckaroo the Buckaroo**

*"Calling All Cowboys Radio"*  
88.9 FM, KPOV High Desert  
Community Radio  
http://www.kpov.org  
http://kpov.od.streamguys.us/calling\_ all\_cowboys\_new\_56k.mp3  
e-mail: callingallcowboys@hotmail.com  
Station NFLY – No Fly Internet Radio/  
The Flying SL Ranch Radio Show  
radio.spalding-labs.com  
22470 Rickard Rd.  
Bend, OR 97702

**Jim Farrell**

*"Full Gallop"*  
PO Box 444  
Towanda, KS 67144  
Email: TJimFullGallop@gmail.com  
Phone: 316-536-6007

**Doug Figgs**

P. O. Box 3  
Lemitar, NM 87823  
(505) 440-0979  
www.doufiggs.com  
http://www.RioGrandeValleyRadio.com

**Nancy Flagg**

*"Cowboy Tracks"*  
KDRT 95.7 FM live radio  
and internet streaming (www.kdrt.org)  
1623 Fifth Street  
Davis, CA 95616  
Email: CowboyTracks2@gmail.com  
Facebook.com/cowboytracks

**KWC Ameriana Radio Station**

Miguel A. Diaz Gonzalez  
avenida galtzaraborda n°47 2°A  
20100 renteria  
Guipuzcoa  
España  
miguelbilly56@gmail.com

**Paul Hazell**

PH Records  
Royal Mail Building (PO Box 3)  
Brambleside  
Bellbrook Industrial Estate  
Uckfield  
East Sussex  
TN22 1XX  
United Kingdom  
*"Paul Hazell's World Of Country"*  
www.uckfieldfm.co.uk  
Uckfield FM (in the UK)  
paul.hazell@uckfieldfm.co.uk  
Telephone: +44 7775 545 902

**Randy Hill**

*"Western Swing Time Radio Show"*  
5114 Balcones Woods Dr.  
Suite 307-387  
Austin, TX 78759  
KMUZ  
(Plays only western swing)  
westernswingtime@gmail.com  
www.westernswingtime.com

**Gary Holt**

*"Campfire Cafe" and "Saddle Up America"*  
7040 Highway 231 N  
Bethpage, TN 37022  
www.equestrianlegacy.net  
gih50@live.com  
615-478-2138

**Judy James**

*"Cowboy Jubilee"* with Judy James  
and Western Heritage Radio  
PO Box 953  
Weatherford, Texas 76086  
judy@judyjames.com

**Jarle Kvale**

KEYA Public Radio  
PO Box 190  
Belcourt, ND 58316  
jkkeya@utma.com

**Eddy Leverett**

c/o Campfire Productions  
1623 Co. Rd. 820  
Cullman, AL 35057  
*"Around the Campfire"*  
WKUL  
www.wkul.com  
kudzu cowboy@hotmail.com

**Butch and Christina Martin**

*"Whittler's Corner Show"*  
1410 Kubli Road  
Grants Pass, OR 97527  
Earsradio.com  
KSKO Ashland, OR, www.KSKQ.org  
The Dalles, OR, Y102  
KKTY, 100.1, Douglas, WY  
KSHD 93.4 Shady Cove, OR  
KORV 93.5 Ladeview, OR  
www.ButchMartinMusic.com  
www.romancingthewest.org  
541-218-2477

**Heartland Public Radio**

c/o Rowena Muldavin  
2001 Coffey Lane  
Placerville, CA 95667-8718

**Marvin O'Dell***"Around the Campfire"*

www.defendersoffreedomradio.com  
 KKRN, Redding, CA  
 KZNQ, Santa Clarita, CA  
<https://tunein.com/radio/KZNQ-Q-Country-1015-s264146/>  
 www.earsradio.com  
 meoteo@aol.com  
 10430 W. Loma Blanca Dr.  
 Sun City, AZ 85351  
 805-551-4649  
 www.musikode.com

**Bob O'Donnell**

455 12th Avenue Apt 130  
 Baldwin WI 54002.  
 justbobswesternjukebox@gmail.com

**O.J. Sikes**

681 Ellington Rd.  
 Ridgewood, NJ 07450  
 ojsikes@gmail.com  
 KKRN, Redding, CA  
 www.earsradio1.com

**Totsie Slover***"Real West From The Old West"*

AM 1230 KOTS Radio  
 220 S. Gold Ave.  
 Deming, NM 88030  
 575-494-0899  
 realwestoldwest@live.com  
 www.realwestoldwest.com  
 www.demingradio.com  
 Facebook/totsieslover

**JJ Steele***"JJ's Cowboy Corral"*

KLZR  
 103 S. 2nd St.  
 Westcliffe, CO 81252  
 Email: bonerpotteet@aol.com

**Tommy Tucker***"Snake River Radio Roundup"*

93.1 FM/1350 AM KRRC Radio  
 (Does Not Use MP3s)  
 805 Stewart Ave.  
 Lewiston, ID. 83501  
 208-743-1551  
 tommy@idavend.com  
*"Keepin' It Western"*

**Harvey & Me'lissa Turnbow***"Keeping Western Music Alive"*

PO Box 524  
 Christoval, TX 76935  
 325-812-1358  
 325-716-0042  
 Email: keepingitwestern@gmail.com  
 KSCK 100.5 FM  
*"Keeping It Western Show"*  
 www.ksckfm.com

**Wayne & Kathy***"Swing 'n' Country"*

KBOO 90.7 FM  
 20 SE 8th Ave., Portland, OR 97214  
 wkjswingandcountry@comcast.net

## Chapter Update

*Continued from page 40*

on the road around the West. His home in New Orleans has dodged the bullets leveled by recent gulf hurricanes. Look for his new album "Range of the Buffalo" to drop in January of the new year.

I hope all of our members are able to buck up and help prevent the spread of the virus! The heartache of not being able to pour out our hearts in song has been real and pervasive. This too, in time will pass!

**YOUTH CHAPTER****President: Abby Payne****Coordinator: Jane Leche****wmayouthcoordinator@gmail.com**

Trying to stay resilient during a major pandemic is not easy but leave it to IWMA Youth Chapter members to find a way to keep western music alive through social media. For instance, Venessa Carpenter (ID) has

created her own "jam show" called Spurs & Strings on Instagram (@venessacarpenter\_westernsinger) hosting such western performing artists as Jim Jones, Tom Swearingen and Brenn Hill, and has invited fellow youth members to perform such as Kacey and Jenna Thunborg (NM), Thatch Elmer (UT), Caroline Grace Wiseman (TX) and Allora Leonard (CO), just to name a few.

*Venessa Carpenter*

Also, Kacey and Jenna have taken advantage of their Facebook page by posting a couple of western tunes performed in different and fun places (@KJWesternMusic).

Social media can be a powerful tool to keep our young performers connected with each other and in touch with adult performers who are willing to support their virtual efforts (kudos). Live or recorded performances are also simple and fun ways to bring western music to new and old audiences. All youth chapter members are encouraged to share their western performance information and activities and live performance information on the Chapter's social media pages to help "keep it western" and to keep up their performance skills during these difficult times.

**Facebook:** @westernmusicYC**Instagram:** iwmayouthchapter

For more information on the IWMA Youth Chapter, contact Jane Leche, IWMA Youth Chapter Coordinator at wmayouthcoordinator@gmail.com or visit the Youth Chapter section under the Membership tab on the IWMA website: iwwesternmusic.org.



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# MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



[IWesternMusic.org](http://IWesternMusic.org)

It's OK to list my information in the IWMA Membership Directory?  
*(printed annually; distributed during annual meeting)*

- Address  Yes  No
- Phone Number  Yes  No
- Email  Yes  No

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Music and or entertainment business persons and performers. Professional members may have a listing on the IWMA website. Choose your level of Professional Membership below:

- Individual Professional Membership ..... \$75
- Individual Youth Membership..... \$15  
*(thru high school graduation)*
- Individual Youth Membership..... \$25  
*(high school graduation thru 21)*
- Patron Membership .....\$100
- Business/Gathering Professional Membership .....\$150
- Individual Professional Life Membership ..... \$1,000
- Sustaining Professional Membership *(CC charged monthly)*  
 \$10 monthly  \$25 monthly  other \_\_\_\_\_

## SUPPORTING MEMBERSHIP

Not a Music or Media Professional but want to take part? Choose your level of Supporting Membership below:

- Individual Supporting Membership ..... \$50
- Individual Youth Membership..... \$15  
*(thru high school graduation)*
- Individual Youth Membership..... \$25  
*(high school graduation thru 21)*
- Family Supporting Membership ..... \$75  
*(one vote per household)*
- Patron Membership .....\$100
- Individual Supporting Life Membership ..... \$1,000
- Sustaining Professional Membership *(CC charged monthly)*  
 \$10 monthly  \$25 monthly  other \_\_\_\_\_

## CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP

In addition to your Professional or Supporting Membership, you may also support your local chapter of IWMA by adding a Chapter Membership. Check the chapter(s) you wish to join and add the related charge for each chapter.

- Arizona  Upper Michigan/  Wyoming
- California  NE Wisconsin  Western
- Colorado  New Mexico  Wordsmiths
- Columbia  Oklahoma *(poets, authors,*
- East Coast  Texas *songwriters)*
- Kansas  Utah  Youth
- Chapter Membership (each) Individual..... \$15  
*(each for first 10 chapters/\$10 per additional chapter)*
- Chapter Membership (each) Family ..... \$25

Tell us about your involvement in Western Music. Check all that apply.

- Performer  Instrumentalist  Songwriter  Poet  Storyteller
- Author  Manager/Booking Agent  Publisher  Producer
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**IWMA dues are not tax deductible except as a normal business expense. Donations to the General Operating, Youth Scholarship & Crisis Funds are tax deductible.**

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Who can we thank for referring you to IWMA?

\_\_\_\_\_

*For more details or questions*

**Email: [marsha@westernmusic.org](mailto:marsha@westernmusic.org)**

**Phone: 505.563.0673**

**Website: [IWesternMusic.org](http://IWesternMusic.org)**

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